

The

# SMITH HILL REPORT



PUBLISHED BY THE RHODE ISLAND FEDERATION OF TEACHERS & HEALTH PROFESSIONALS/AFT, AFL-CIO

## Three Year Moratorium Proposed

The Senate Education Committee held a second hearing on Senator Adam Satchell's bill to place a moratorium on using standardized tests as a high school graduation requirement. The original version of S2059 would impose a five (5) year hold on using standardized tests as a graduation requirement. The compromise bill heard last week, [S2059 Substitute A](#), would create a three (3) year moratorium. The Committee heard testimony but did not vote on the bill. We expect a vote to take place after the Assembly returns from this week's recess.

At the hearing, RIFTHP President Frank Flynn, Steve Brown of the ACLU and Patrick Crowley of the NEA/RI supported the amended version of the bill. Opposition came from the business group Rhode Island Public Expenditure Council, RIDE and a representative of small businesses.

Frank Flynn's testimony was summarized in a letter he recently sent to all Rhode Island Senators. To view the letter, [click here](#). Flynn stressed the need to act quickly, as high school seniors will drop out if they do not see a path to graduation.

## TAKE ACTION

If you support placing a moratorium on using NECAP or other standardized tests as a graduation requirement we urge you to let your Senator know of your position. You can send an email to your Senator by [clicking here](#).



Please support the testing moratorium on the use of the NECAP as a graduation requirement

The Rhode Island Federation of Teachers and Health Professionals strongly supports Senate Bill 2059 Sub A, which is currently under consideration before the Senate Education Committee. This bill would prohibit the NECAP or any other state assessment from being used as a graduation requirement until July 1, 2017.

The NECAP test was never designed to be used as a measure to determine a student's eligibility to graduate.

Take action now. Let your Senator know you support this bill by using the link below.

In order to address your message to the appropriate recipient, we need to identify where you are. Please look up and use your full nine-digit zip for the best results.

April 22, 2014

## In This Issue

→ Three Year Moratorium Proposed

→ TAKE ACTION

→ Substitute Teacher Qualifications

→ Bill Introductions

→ Coming Up

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[House Contacts](#)

[Senate/House Committee Assignments](#)

***It is crucial that Senators hear from moratorium supporters in the next week to counter the strong opposition organized by the supporters of Commissioner Gist's graduation policy.***

## Substitute Teacher Qualifications

On Wednesday, April 9, the Senate Education Committee heard testimony on legislation by Senator Pichardo, [S2428](#), which would permit someone to be a substitute teacher if they have two (2) or more years of college. Under current RIDE regulations, you need to possess a Bachelor's Degree to get a certificate to serve as a substitute teacher.

Lisa Foehr of RIDE and RIFTHP lobbyist James Parisi both testified against the bill. Parisi confirmed that there are districts that are having a difficult time in finding adequate substitute teachers, but that the remedy to the problem should be to increase sub pay or provide benefits instead of lower the education standards for those serving in the classroom.



LaborVision is seen on Cox  
Ch. 14 and FioS Ch. 33

Tuesdays @ 7PM

Thursday @ 8PM

Saturday @ 5PM

## Bill Introductions

If you would like to read the full text of a bill, just click on the bill number.

### **Tax Credit Scholarships**

[\(S2473 Walaska, Senate Finance\)](#)

The RIFTHP opposes this bill which would increase the dollar amount of the tax credit that a single business entity could obtain for contributions to scholarship organizations from one hundred thousand dollars (\$100,000) to two hundred thousand dollars (\$200,000) in any tax year. The act would also increase the total aggregate amount of tax credits that could be approved by the division of taxation in a fiscal year from one million five hundred thousand dollars (\$1,500,000) to two million dollars (\$2,000,000).

### **Tax Equity - Municipal Aid**

[\(S2475 Satchell, Senate Finance\)](#)

The RIFTHP supports this bill which would restore general revenue sharing with cities and towns commencing with fiscal 2015. It would further impose a two percent (2%) tax increase for all personal income over two hundred fifty thousand dollars (\$250,000) for residents and non-residents, including estates and trusts and other types of income beginning January 1, 2015.

### **Charter and State School Funding - Attendance**

[\(S2581 Cool Rumsey, Senate Finance\)](#)

The RIFTHP supports this bill which would extend relief to the local district from paying the second, third, and fourth quarterly payment if the student does not attend the first quarter or does not return in the second quarter.

### **Teacher Evaluation Frequency**

[\(S2738 Goodwin, Senate Education\)](#)

The RIFTHP supports this bill which would provide that teachers who obtain a rating of "highly effective" or the equivalent thereof would be evaluated not more than once every four (4) years, and that teachers who obtain a rating of "effective" or the equivalent thereof would be evaluated not more than once every three (3) years.

### **DD Funding - \$15,000,000 - ADA Compliance**

[\(S2746 Doyle, Senate Finance\)](#)

The RIFTHP supports this resolution which would appropriate the sum of fifteen million dollars (\$15,000,000) to the Department of BHDDH, Division of Developmental Disabilities for services for the developmentally disabled.

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## Coming Up

On Tuesday, April 29, at the rise, the [House Judiciary Committee](#) will hear testimony on [H8014](#) (Constitutional Amendment - Line Item Veto, Morgan). On Wednesday, April 30 at the rise, the [House Judiciary Committee](#) will hear testimony on [H7449](#) (Just Cause/Right to Rent, Edwards).

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