

The

SMITH HILL REPORT



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

May 4, 2018

Quiet Week on Smith Hill

A number of bills being monitored by the RIFTHP were heard this week, but there was not much RIFTHP testimony on most of the legislation. The RIFTHP did signal support of legislation by Senator Gallo ([S2184](#)) that would direct RIDE to create a funding formula for Career and Technical Programs being offered by school districts. Her bill, heard in the Senate Education Committee on Wednesday, May 2nd, would also create a work group to assist RIDE in its efforts to create a formula. The RIFTHP, along with other interested parties, would be represented on the work group.

The RIFTHP also watched several charter school-related bills. [H7884](#) by Rep. Barros would ensure that Mayoral Academies would reflect the student demographics of the sending school districts. Another bill, [H8121](#) by Rep. Phillips, would permit charter schools that are career and technical programs to create admissions criteria. Both bills were heard in the House Health, Education and Welfare Committee on May 2nd.

Safe Schools Act Advocacy

The RIFTHP has testified in support of legislation to prevent those with a concealed carry gun permit to possess firearms on school property. The bill has an exemption for police officers. The RI Coalition Against Gun Violence is hosting an email campaign to generate support for this bill. If you are interested in contacting your legislator, use this link (ricagv.org/email-your-local-reps-the-safe-schools-act-of-2018) to offer your support.

Retiree Pension Legislation Campaign

RI AFT/R, the AFT retiree chapter in the state, is supporting legislation that would provide a supplemental pension payment in the form of a stipend of up to \$450 in years in which a pension COLA is not paid to retirees. The House version of this legislative initiative was heard by the House Finance Committee last week. RI AFT/R is urging retirees and supporters to contact their legislators in support of the legislation. To do so, use this link (actionnetwork.org/letters/my3percent) to express your support.

Bills on the Move

The following bills have passed the Committee process and the full chamber of either the House or the Senate. To be enacted into law, the bill must pass the same process in the other chamber before being sent to the Governor for approval.

Duty to Report – Sexual Abuse

[\(S2353\)](#) *Goodwin, Senate Passed 34-0, House Judiciary*

The RIFTHP supports this bill which would require representatives of educational programs to notify their leadership of all reports of sexual abuse, who shall notify the Department of Children, Youth and Families and the school superintendent. It would also require the Commissioner of Elementary and Secondary Education and the Director of the Department of Children, Youth and Families to adopt rules to orderly and completely implement this sexual abuse complaint reporting process.

Student Work Permit Education Program

[\(S2469\)](#) *Gallo, Senate Passed 33-0, House Labor*

This bill would require children who seek a special limited work permit to successfully complete a worker rights' training program established and funded by the Department of Labor and Training.

Persons with Developmental Disabilities – Rights

[\(S2533\)](#) *McCaffrey, Senate Passed 35-0, House Health Education and Welfare*

This bill would expand certain rights of persons with developmental disabilities.

School Safety Survey – 3 Year Resubmission

[\(S2639 Sub A\)](#) *Gallo, Senate Passed 34-0, House Health Education and Welfare*

This bill would require that school district safety assessments be provided to the Rhode Island School Safety Committee every three (3) years for review and recommendations. This bill creates a 12 (twelve) person state-wide school safety committee which will include 1 (one) RIFTHP appointee.

Education Commissioner – Senate Advice and Consent

[\(S2646\)](#) *Pearson, Senate Passed 32-0, House Health Education and Welfare*

This bill would provide that the Commissioner of Elementary and Secondary Education would be appointed by the Governor with the advice and consent of the Senate. The Commissioner of Elementary and Secondary Education would serve at the pleasure of the Governor.

School Carbon Monoxide Detectors

[\(H7041\)](#) *McNamara, House Passed 74-0, Senate Education*

This bill would require that effective January 1, 2019, all school buildings where students are in attendance would be required to have carbon monoxide detectors installed and maintained therein. The bill would also authorize the Fire

Safety Code Board of Appeal and Review to promulgate rules and regulations to enforce the provisions of this requirement.

Education Curriculum – Consent – Sexual Activity

[\(H7044 Sub A\)](#) *Solomon, House Passed 62-3, Senate Education*)

This bill would permit that education on consent and sexual activity be increased in secondary schools as part of a family life course.

PSAT / SAT Test – Home School Eligibility

[\(H7155\)](#) *Casey, House Passed 69-1, Senate Education*)

This bill would include home schooled students in the program to provide the PSAT and SAT free of charge to all Rhode Island public school students for the fiscal year starting July 1, 2018.

Schools - Sunscreen Application

[\(H7158\)](#) *Bennett, Passed House 68-0, Senate Education*)

This bill would allow students in public schools to possess and use sunscreen.

SIGN UP
NOW!



register to receive the SHR directly, [click here](#).