



# AFT-West Virginia 2016 Legislative Update

Please  
Post

Thursday, January 28, 2016

## PEIA

Last week, AFT-WV Christine Campbell addressed the PEIA Finance Board again about possible solutions to address the \$120 million in proposed benefit cuts. The PEIA Finance Board met to consider a new fiscal plan based on Governor Tomblin's commitment to increase the tobacco tax to partially fund the PEIA shortfall.

After discussion, the PEIA Finance Board voted to approve a new plan based on the Governor's revenue plan. This new PEIA proposal would reduce drastic cuts & increase premiums by 12%.

However, the WV Legislature still must act on the Governor's tax proposal in order to prevent the drastic benefit cuts originally slated for all public employees.



At press time, there has been no attempt by the House or the Senate to advance the Governor's proposal or create their own solution to fix and fully fund PEIA.

## WV Supreme Court rules on Senate vacancy

The WV Supreme Court issued its opinion on Friday regarding the replacement for Senator Daniel Hall, who resigned several weeks ago. The Court ruled 3-1 in favor of the Republicans, and the Governor quickly appointed Sue Cline from Wyoming County to the seat.

## Charter Schools bill introduced in House

HB 4011 was introduced last week. House Education Chair Paul Espinosa has publicly supported this bill and AFT-WV expects the education committee will act on it soon.

HB 4011 is more troublesome than last year's charter schools bill because it removes local community and employee buy-in. It also creates an entirely independent Public Charter Schools Oversight and Accountability Board, complete with gubernatorial appointees and paid staff. This would essentially be a second State Board of Education for charter schools and could be in conflict with the state's constitution. Additionally, the Charter Schools Governing Board would consist of nine voting members, three of which would be parents of charter school students. The principal, two teachers and one service personnel would be **non-voting** members of the governing board.

AFT-WV maintains that charter schools are a distraction to real solutions. Charter schools divert already limited funding from our public schools, providing profit for out-of-state charter school management firms. There is no evidence charter schools produce improvements in student achievement. Watch for more information **-including action items-** from AFT-WV in the coming weeks on this bill. **AFT-WV opposes HB 4011.**



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## Education Bills of Note (With Status) as of 1-28-16:

[Committee Sub. For SB 13](#) Increasing penalties for overtaking and passing stopped school buses; Passed Senate, pending House Judiciary; **AFT-WV SUPPORTS**

[SB 90](#) Allows collective bargaining between state and its employees; pending Senate Labor; **AFT-WV SUPPORTS**

[SB 100](#) Reduces the student-school nurse ratio from 1,500-1 in grades K-7 to 750-1 and expands it to all levels of school in the 2016-17 school year to provide for ever-increasing medical needs of students, while ensuring that school nurses will do the work, not contract services; pending Senate Education; **AFT-WV SUPPORTS**

[HB 2981](#) Extends the time for teachers in the defined contribution retirement plan to purchase service credit in the State Teachers Retirement System; pending House Education; **AFT-WV SUPPORTS**

[HB 4295](#) Creates Innovation in Education designated schools, which demonstrate innovation in STEM, community school partnership, entrepreneurship or career pathways and includes designated funding; pending House Education; **AFT-WV SUPPORTS**

### **School Calendar**

Currently, there are three school calendar bills. AFT-WV supports school calendars that provide thorough instructional time and allow local communities to develop calendars to fit their unique needs.

[SB 46](#) Changes school calendar mandatory school instructional time from 180 days to minutes; pending Senate Education

[SB 313](#) Changes school calendar mandatory school instructional time from 180 days to minutes; pending Senate Education

[HB 4028](#) Changes school calendar and instructional time by mandating school instructional terms for students may begin no earlier than September 1 and must terminate on or before June 5. The bill decreases the number of instructional days for students by five days and requires five days for professional development or continuing education; pending House Education



## 2016 Legislative Bad Apples

[HB 4011](#) Creates charter schools in WV with independent governing board and paid staff, minimal community oversight and no employee buy-in; pending House Education; **AFT-WV OPPOSES**

[HB 4005](#) Repeals prevailing wage laws for publicly financed construction projects, which will enable cheap, often undocumented workers from out of state corporations to under bid projects and ultimately result in lower wages and less jobs for thousands of West Virginians in the construction trades; passed House, pending Senate Government Organization; **AFT-WV OPPOSES**

[SB 1](#) Right to Work legislation, designed to weaken unions, prohibits closed shop union membership; forces unions to bargain for and represent non-dues paying employees in the bargaining unit; passed Senate, pending House Judiciary; **AFT-WV OPPOSES**

[SB 407](#) Creates charter schools in WV with independent governing board and paid staff, minimal community oversight and no employee buy-in; pending Senate Education; **AFT-WV OPPOSES**



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