



AFT-West Virginia 2016 Legislative Update

Please
Post

Tuesday, March 15, 2016

SESSION ENDS WITH NO BUDGET NO SOLUTION FOR PEIA!



After the House failed to pass the Senate's proposal for a \$1 increase in the tobacco tax, no effort was made by the leadership to pass another funding stream for the \$120 million PEIA shortfall. Several attempts were made by the minority party to amend PEIA funding sources into other bills, but their efforts failed on strict party lines. On Friday, AFT-WV joined with WV AFL-CIO and other employee groups to hold a press conference to call for action on PEIA. The session ended without a solution to the PEIA crisis and without a balanced budget for the upcoming fiscal year. The Governor will have to call a special legislative session this spring to develop a budget by July 1. If a budget is not passed by July 1, there is the potential for state government to shut down.

School calendar bill passes; Contact Governor Tomblin NOW and urge him to sign HB 4171

[HB 4171](#) passed both chambers and calls for a school year that begins no earlier than August 10 and completes by June 10. It also permits the use of accrued instructional minutes to make up days lost to inclement weather. The bill is awaiting action by the Governor and AFT-WV needs your help!

Please contact Governor Tomblin at 304-558-2000 or visit <http://bit.ly/1U4kAO0> to email him via AFT-WV's Action Network. Urge Governor Tomblin to sign HB 4171.

Common Core bill passes on final day of session

After much back and forth by both chambers, [Committee Substitute for HB 4014](#) passed on the final day of the session. The final version of the bill doesn't abandon the state's new content standards but calls for the replacement of the Smarter Balanced Assessment. The bill now awaits action by Governor Tomblin.

Died in Last Week of Session

Salary Equity revamp fails to pass out of House

[HB 4465](#) proposed to eliminate the current calculation for salary equity for school service personnel. By eliminating the current calculation, the legislature would have cut \$6 million from hard working service personnel across West Virginia. The bill was on 2nd reading, but was removed from the House floor. **AFT-WV opposed HB 4465.**

Retaliatory bill would have stripped union representation from PEIA Board

[SB 622](#) would have changed the composition of the Public Employees Insurance Agency Finance Board. SB 622 would have reconfigured the board, which approves PEIA health care benefits packages for public employees and retirees each year. The board would have shrunk from 10 to eight members; a union representative and an at-large citizen member would have been removed from the current board. **AFT-WV opposed SB 622.**

Online lesson plan bill dies after outcry from educators

[SB 681](#) called for teachers' lesson plans to be available on the Internet to students and parents. Over 20,000 people have viewed the SB 681 action item on AFT-WV's Facebook page. Thanks to your calls and emails, the bill died in the Senate Education Committee. **AFT-WV opposed SB 681.**



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Education Bills Passed by Both Chambers

Comm. Sub. for SB 13	Increasing penalties for overtaking and passing stopped school buses
SB 146	Establishing instruction standards for early childhood education
SB 369	Reducing legislative education reporting requirements
SB 459	Requiring payment of tuition by a county board to the Mountaineer Challenge Academy
HB 4175	Relating generally to home schooling
HB 4261	Prohibits the sale or transfer of student data to vendors
HB 4295	Governor's bill to expand the Innovation Zone program; creates Innovation in Education designated schools, which demonstrate innovation in STEM, community school partnership, entrepreneurship or career pathways and includes designated funding
HB 4301	Relating to a framework for initiating comprehensive transformation of school leadership
HB 4322	Expanding the Earn and Learn component of the Workforce Development Initiative
HB 4316	Relating to reimbursement of certification fee for National Board for Professional Teaching Standards
HB 4566	Changes timelines for RIF and transfer of personnel; changes preferred recall posting and notification process for school service personnel; changes transfer timelines for service personnel who work one-on-one with students

Dead Education Bills (Reported on in Previous AFT-WV Updates)

SB 105	Creating Tim Tebow Act allowing nonpublic school students to participate in SSAC member school athletics
SB 378	Relating to truancy intervention
SB 631	Authorizing higher education boards of governors to develop retirement and incentive packages
HB 2474	Relating to the compensation of personnel employed at the West Virginia Schools for the Deaf and the Blind
HB 2960	Permitting county boards of education to develop emergency preparedness drills in schools
HB 4291	Increasing penalties for teachers who commit sexual offenses against children
HB 4445	Relating to the adoption of instructional educational resources
HB 4572	Excepting specialized contract instructors from the definition of teacher



Dead on Arrival:

Education Bills Never Considered by Committee

SB 90	Allows collective bargaining between state and its employees
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
SB 549	Requires school counselors spend 100 percent of time on comprehensive school counseling programs
HB 2981	Extends the time for teachers in the defined contribution retirement plan to purchase service credit in the State Teachers Retirement System
HB 4036	Restores language to the code that gives a preference to currently employed certified professional educators when hiring athletic coaches or coaches of other extracurricular activities in public schools
SB 113, SB 114	All of these bills proposed salary increases for teachers and service personnel.
HB 2389, HB 4026 and HB 4039	None of these bills were ever placed on a committee agenda for discussion during the 2016 session.

The 2016 Legislative Session was filled with distractions to the real problems facing working West Virginians. This lack of focus was disappointing to teachers, service personnel and public employees, all facing increased costs and devastating cuts in PEIA coverage from the failure of the legislative leaders to pass a budget.

They had one job, and they didn't do it. Your job, as a West Virginia worker, is to vote in the upcoming elections for candidates who support and respect the work you do.

