



LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

AFT-West Virginia, AFL-CIO



Standing 55 Strong...From Statehouse to Schoolhouse

January 25, 2019

Organizations Stand United Against Omnibus Bill

On Monday, members of the Legislature received a letter from AFT-WV and four other education organizations, outlining their collective concerns about a rumored omnibus education bill.

On Thursday, the Senate Education Committee began discussing the omnibus bill and it was on the agenda for Friday's Senate Education meeting.

On Friday, the Senate Education Committee met for 5 hours and 15 minutes, with constant questions and discussion on the bill. (A bill number has not been assigned yet.) Late Friday evening, the bill passed the committee in a 7-5 vote, along strict party lines. Not one single West Virginian was called to testify about the bill. The bill now moves to the Senate Finance Committee.



If you missed AFT-WV President Fred Albert on Talkline with Hoppy Kercheval on Jan. 25th, you can listen to the broadcast at this link: <http://wvmetronews.com/channel>

The draft bill available to review at press time binds good proposals (sick day incentives to allow accrual of days for purchase of PEIA & TERS credit upon retirement, \$250 tax credit for classroom teachers and a 5% pay raise for both teachers & service personnel) with some very troublesome ones.

Some of the problematic components of the 139 page bill include:

- Numerous sections related to charter school development, including lottery systems for charter school placement and virtual charter schools
- Education Savings Accounts
- Increase class sizes for elementary teachers from 25 to 28, with no additional compensation for overage up to 31
- All central office employees, including administrators will be "at will" employees subject to Board review only
- No pay for employees during work stoppage or strike
- No extracurricular activities allowed during work stoppage or strike
- Differential pay for specific subject areas
- Differential pay for certain counties, and certain schools within the county
- RIF's no longer just using seniority; new process will be similar to the hiring criteria.

Please email and call the Senate Finance Committee members ASAP to express your concerns with this bill! Contact information for the committee is on page 2 of this Legislative Update.

Senate Finance Committee- Contact Information

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WV AFL-CIO Legislative Conference

On Wednesday and Thursday, AFT-WV activists participated in the AFL-CIO's annual Legislative Conference. As part of the conference, attendees traveled to the Capitol and spent time lobbying legislators as well as observing committee meetings and floor sessions.

This Week Under the Dome

Other bills of note that advanced or were introduced this week included:

SB 1- Free Community and Technical College for In-State Students

This bill would establish a "last-dollar-in" program that would cover tuition for students wishing to attend a community and technical college two-year program. The state would provide additional money for the student after federal Pell Grants or any other financial aid are applied. After much debate on the Senate floor, two amendments failed that would have expanded the program to four-year institutions and union apprenticeship programs. *Passed Senate; sent to House*

HB 2378-Revocation of Teaching License for Registered Sex Offenders

was passed out of House Education and sent on to House Judiciary. The bill relates to revocation of teaching license if registered as sex offender. The committee also passed a companion bill with the same number. The companion bill is for revocation of bus driver's certification and termination of service personnel if registered as sex offender. *Passed House Education; pending House Judiciary*

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