



Legislative Update

by Otto Fajen
MNEA Legislative Director
otto.fajen@mnea.org

Number 3
January 25, 2019
www.mnea.org

COMMITTEE ACTION TO RAMP UP NEXT WEEK

House and Senate committees have been appointed, but the legislative schedule was affected by the Martin Luther King, Jr. federal holiday. Committee activity this week was limited primarily to budget-related committees and committees with scheduled meeting times that are later in the week.

Next week will have a normal schedule and education-related committees are likely to meet. The House Workforce Development Committee and the House Higher Education Committee will meet regularly on Mondays. The House Elementary and Secondary Education Committee and the Senate Education Committee will meet regularly on Tuesdays. The Senate Government Reform Committee will also meet on Tuesdays, and some education-related bills have already been referred to that committee.

BUDGET COMMITTEES

The Senate Appropriations Committee and the House Subcommittee on Appropriations - Education both held meetings on January 23 to hear overview presentations from the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) and the Department of Higher Education (DHE). The committees also heard public testimony from interested individuals and agencies. Education-related witnesses speaking before the committees included representatives for sheltered workshops, independent living centers, foster care agencies, early childhood education, Parents as Teachers, the Access Missouri scholarship program and the Missouri Scholars Academy.

The House Budget Committee heard testimony and asked questions of officials for the Department of Revenue regarding state revenue and state income tax collections. The Department indicates that recent tax changes coupled with existing calculation errors in state income tax withholding have reduced withholding of state income tax revenues and that this reduction is a significant cause of the lower than expected year-to-date state general revenue receipts. Those receipts are currently about 10% below last year's revenues, while the consensus revenue estimate for current year revenues, upon which the current year budget is based, is for a 1.7% increase in state general revenues.

ETHICS IN GOVERNMENT

The House General Laws Committee began the hearing on HB 445 (Dogan) on January 23. The original bill would ban local official lobbyist gifts to elected and appointed local officials, including lobbyist gifts to school board members and superintendents. MNEA believes this policy helps make local governments, including school districts, more open and accountable to the public interest and supports the original bill.

Rep. Dogan proposed two committee amendments that significantly expand the bill to incorporate similar lobbyist gift bans, revolving door policies, campaign contribution limits and open records law changes for local officials. However, the committee concluded the hearing on January 24 and voted the bill without including the amendments.

WORKING AFTER RETIREMENT

The Senate Health and Pensions Committee heard SB 17 (Romine) on January 23. SB 17 would undo the effect of a change passed last session, SB 892, as it relates to community college teachers. SB 892 applies when a PSRS retiree is doing work in a school (or other PSRS employer) in a position that does not require a DESE certificate. For that work, there is no limit on hours, but the retiree can earn no more than \$15,000 during the school year (60% of the \$25,000 state minimum teachers' salary).

An unintended effect of SB 892 was to also change the working after retirement (WAR) limit for community college teachers who are PSRS retirees. Community colleges are PSRS employers, but community college teachers are not required by law to have a DESE certificate, so the new law also applies to their teaching work. SB 17 would reverse this change, leaving PSRS retirees employed as community college teachers once again under the same 550 hour limit per school year that still applies when PSRS retirees teach in school districts. The Association supports the bill to correct this unintended change.

REGISTER NOW TO ATTEND YOUR MNEA LEGISLATIVE FORUM!

Missouri NEA's regional legislative events will continue in 2019. These free events will be legislative discussion panels. As in previous years, these events provide a chance for members to build relationships with area legislators and support their understanding of MNEA priorities and education issues. Plan to attend and invite fellow members, administrators and school board members who would enjoy and benefit from a discussion regarding support for public education!

LEGISLATIVE FORUM SCHEDULE:

Jefferson County/Southeast Legislative Forum	January 24
Kansas City Regional Legislative Forum	January 31
St. Louis Legislative Forum	March 7

PLEASE REGISTER NOW for your regional MNEA Legislative Forum at

<https://www.mnea.org/Missouri/PoliticalAction/5.aspx>

Be sure to click through the "RSVP now" link for your event and then "Send RSVP" to register. For additional information contact Sandy Smith (sandy.smith@mnea.org).

Legislative Update 2019

Missouri National Education Association
1810 East Elm Street
Jefferson City, MO 65101-4174
(573) 634-3202 or (800) 392-0236
www.mnea.org

Charles E. Smith, President
DeeAnn Aull, Executive Director
Otto Fajen, Legislative Director
Sandy Smith, Administrative Assistant