



ALLIANCE LEGISLATIVE REPORT (94-64)

BUDGET APPROVED; LEGISLATURE ADJOURNS

The Illinois General Assembly approved a Fiscal Year 2007 State budget this week and adjourned until the November Veto Session. The House of Representatives passed **SB 1520 (Trotter, D-Chicago)** on a straight partisan roll call (Democrats voting “yes”, Republicans voting “no”) on Wednesday; the Senate approved the budget in a similar partisan fashion on Thursday evening. The omnibus State appropriations bill, over 800 pages long, was crafted by the Democrat Governor, House Speaker, and Senate President without input from Republican leaders. For the education budget numbers, please refer to Alliance Legislative Report 94-63 (www.iasb.com/files/alr-9463.htm).

No funding for the School Construction Grant Program was included in the budget bill. A bill was defeated on the House floor on Thursday afternoon that would have provided \$500 million for school construction. Like the school construction funding bill that was defeated in the Senate in April, **HB 3904 (Dugan, D-Bradley)** was defeated on a partisan roll call with Republicans in opposition. Republican members again raised concerns about not having a funding source to pay for the State bonding and not being consulted in the drafting of the legislation.

Several “Budget Implementation Bills” were also approved to provide the necessary authority to carry out the budget provisions:

SB 176 (Shadid, D-Peoria) contains language to implement the education-related provisions of the budget. It allows for the Transition Assistance payment, establishes procedures to distribute the Arts Education funding increase, sets the new foundation level, and retains the poverty payment at 100%.

SB 230 (Harmon, D-Oak Park) contains language to implement the revenue-related provisions of the budget. It amends the Income Tax Act regarding how corporate taxpayers report losses, and makes changes as to when a qualified solid waste energy facility (QSWEF) must reimburse the Public Utility Fund. The Department of Revenue estimates that the provisions amending the Illinois Income Tax Act will generate approximately \$15,000,000 per year in additional income tax revenues. The provisions amending the Public Utilities Act will generate savings that would be small in fiscal year 2007, but would gradually increase each year. The average annual savings over the next 10 years would be approximately \$15,000,000 to \$20,000,000 and approximately \$28,900,000 per year thereafter.

SB 1863 (Hunter, D-Chicago) contains language to implement the health services-related provisions of the budget – mostly related to Medicare and Medicaid payments. The Governor's Office of Management and Budget estimates that this bill, if enacted into law, will have a fiscal impact of at least \$100 million, which will be necessary to enact a balanced budget.

SB 1977 (Schoenberg, D-Evanston) contains language to allow for “fund sweeps” from hundreds of dedicated State funds into the State’s General Revenue Fund. The Governor's Office of Management and Budget estimates that this bill, if enacted into law, will have a fiscal impact of at least \$240 million, which will be necessary to enact a balanced budget.

BILL APPROVED TO MAKE 6% SALARY LIMITATION ADJUSTMENTS

SB 49 (Silverstein, D-Chicago) contains an agreement on the adjustments to the 6% salary limitation provisions from the TRS pension bill from last year (see www.iasb.com/files/alr-9463.htm for details).

The House approved the bill on Tuesday; the Senate passed the bill on Wednesday. The bill will be sent to the Governor for his signature.

BILL DEFEATED TO EXTEND THE “7% SOLUTION”

The bill to extend the Alternative General Homestead Exemption (the “7% Solution”) was soundly defeated on the House floor on Wednesday. **SB 2350 (Harmon, D-Oak Park)**, reviewed in the last Alliance Legislative Report (www.iasb.com/files/alr-9463.htm), was defeated on a 37-69-6 vote. Phone calls from school administrators and board members made a significant impact on the outcome of this legislation. Thank you for your participation in this important process.

BILLS APPROVED BY THE LEGISLATURE

The following bills received final legislative approval this week and will be sent to the Governor:

SB 585 (Cullerton, D-Chicago) amends the Open Meetings Act to redefine a "meeting" to include gatherings, whether in person or by telephone call, video or audio conference, electronic means (such as e-mail, chat, and instant messaging), or other means of contemporaneous interactive communication for the purpose of discussing public business.

SB 859 (Maloney, D-Chicago) includes under the reasons to revoke a teacher’s certificate, the failure to disclose on an employment application any previous conviction for a sex offense.

SB 860 (Demuzio, D-Carlinville) contains provisions brought forth by the Illinois State Action for Education Leadership Project (SAELP), a project of the Wallace Foundation and Illinois State University, regarding mentoring, evaluations, and professional development for principals.

SB 1497 (Lightford, D-Maywood) contains the language for the Governor’s “Pre-School for All Children” program by expanding the current preschool provisions in the School Code. The grants, based on the appropriations the legislature makes in a given year, will give first priority to at-risk children and second priority to qualified programs serving primarily children with a family income of less than 4 times the federally-defined poverty level.

SB 1682 (Harmon, D-Oak Park) contains provisions regarding the Property Tax Extension Limitation Law (PTELL) and taxing district referenda. It changes the definition of “limiting rate” for PTELL taxing districts, sets forth new ballot questions for PTELL counties, provides a new referendum opportunity for taxing districts that would allow a specified percentage to be used in place of the lesser of 5% or the percentage increase in the CPI for a specified period of time, changes the Rate Increase Factor to be allowed only for rate increases first effective for the 2006 levy year, any preceding levy year (after referendum approval) and any referendum held prior to March 22, 2006, and allows a taxing district that was subject to PTELL prior to 1995 and that approved a tax increase at a general election held after 2002 to be allowed to choose the number of years to implement the Rate Increase Factor. For a more detailed summary, please e-mail: dsullivan@iasb.com

SB 2202 (del Valle, D-Chicago), with respect to an early childhood certificate, provides that the student teaching portion of the practical experience requirement may involve supervised work with children under 6 years of age or with children in kindergarten through grade 3 or both.

SB 2795 (Shadid, D-Peoria) contains the Governor’s school district reorganization plan. More information on SB 2795 can be found at: www.iasb.com/files/alr-9460.htm.

SB 3086 (Garrett, D-Lake Forest) repeals the Eminent Domain Article of the Code of Civil Procedure and moves its provisions into the new Eminent Domain Act. The bill adds new substantive

provisions relating to property takings for private use, the burden of proof, the elimination of blight, relocation expenses, and attorney's fees.

UNFAVORABLE LEGISLATION STOPPED

The Alliance had a successful year stopping many bills that would have been detrimental to local school districts. Many of these bills would have usurped the authority from the local school district or would have placed new unfunded mandates on the district. Alliance members – school board members, superintendents, principals, and business officials – were outstanding this year in making calls to legislators on these unfavorable bills. Many times it was only the Alliance that took a position on the bills and worked to stop them.

THE ALLIANCE LOBBYISTS THANK YOU FOR YOUR HARD WORK AND PARTICIPATION.

The following bills were derailed this spring:

HB 1577 (Lyons, J., D-Chicago) would have established State-issued vouchers for parents to pay tuition for their children to attend non-public schools.

HB 2012 (Soto, D-Chicago) originally contained pages of new restrictive procedures all school districts would have had to perform regarding school building openings and closings. The sponsor amended the bill because of Alliance concerns and restricted the bill to the Chicago Board of Education only.

HB 4310 (Kosel, R-New Lenox) originally would have required all school board members to receive mandatory training from the State Board of Education. It was amended because of Alliance concerns and now only contains a requirement that newly elected school board members take an oath of office and states school board duties.

HB 5031 (Hannig, D-Mt. Olive) would have provided super protection for school district education support personnel (ESP) by providing that if a school board has any vacancies for the following school term for an ESP, the positions becoming available shall be tendered to the employees who were previously removed or dismissed from that category or any other category of position.

HB 5340 (Sommer, R-Mackinaw) and **SB 2784 (Garrett, D-Lake Forest)**, for school district employees only, would have allowed the use of sick leave for birth, adoption or placement for adoption, or foster care of a child.

HB 5370 (Giles, D-Chicago) would have significantly changed the process to grant a mandate waiver and would have made it very difficult to have any more mandate waivers approved. The Alliance was the only opponent of the bill.

HB 5547 (Berrios, D-Chicago), strongly opposed by the Alliance, would have required schools to provide food service in the summer.

SB 2670 (Collins, D-Chicago), with respect to residency, would have provided that "legal custody" includes custody by an adult who demonstrates that he or she has assumed and exercises primary (instead of legal) responsibility for the pupil. The bill, opposed by the Alliance, was overly broad and vague. Weeks of negotiations between the Alliance and the bill's supporters failed to result in a compromise.

Food Service Rules: Though not in legislative form, the Alliance worked strongly against the State Board of Education's rule proposal to remove "junk food" from elementary and middle schools. The

proposal, however, was far more than a “junk food” prohibition as it would have significantly changed entire school food service programs. The overly restrictive rules were prohibited by the Joint Committee on Administrative Rules (JCAR).

Please refer to www.iasb.com/files/alr-9448.htm for bills that were stopped earlier in the session.

Alliance Legislative Reports:
Bill Text/Status: Illinois General Assembly

www.iasb.com
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