



ALLIANCE LEGISLATIVE REPORT (95-3)

SENATE APPROVES TAX EXEMPTION BILL

The Senate approved a bill that would extend the alternate homestead property tax exemption for Cook County (“7% Solution”) and for all other counties that adopt the exemption within 6 months of the effective date of the new Act. It increases the eligible exemption cap from \$20,000 to \$60,000 and extends the program for three years in Cook County and four years in all other counties.

The bill, opposed by the Alliance, not only would reduce (or shift) the property tax revenues in Cook County, but would likely have a significant effect on the school aid formula statewide. The Senate Revenue Committee approved the bill on Thursday and the bill passed out of the full Senate on Friday.

The bill also creates the Returning Veterans' Homestead Exemption to provide a new property tax exemption for residential property that is owned and occupied as a residence by a veteran. The bill will now be sent to the full Senate for consideration.

“GREEN CLEANING” BILL APPROVED

The House Environmental Health Committee approved a bill this week that would require schools to use environmentally safe products for cleaning. **HB 895 (May, D-Highland Park)** creates the Green Cleaning Schools Act to require the Illinois Green Government Coordinating Council (IGGCC), in consultation with other agencies, to establish and amend on an annual basis guidelines and specifications for environmentally-sensitive cleaning and maintenance products for use in school facilities. By no later than 90 days after implementation of the guidelines and specifications, all elementary and secondary public and non-public schools shall establish a green cleaning policy and exclusively purchase and use environmentally-sensitive cleaning products pursuant to the guidelines and specifications, except that a school may deplete its existing cleaning and maintenance supply stocks and implement the new requirements in the procurement cycle for the following school year.

The Alliance testified in opposition to the bill in committee.

In an effort to address Alliance concerns, the bill sponsor amended the bill to state that schools must comply if the requirement would be “economically feasible”. However, if the school district finds that it is not economically feasible, it must provide an annual written notification to the IGGCC. The IGGCC, headed by the Lieutenant Governor, is comprised of the directors of seven State agencies charged with coordinating efforts to reduce pollution and protect the environment.

The bill now moves to the full House of Representatives for consideration.

OTHER BILL ACTION THIS WEEK

HB 38 (Cross, R-Oswego) allows a school board and administration to suspend or expel students if they have made an explicit threat on an internet web site against a school employee, a student, or any school-related personnel. **The bill was approved** by the House Elementary and Secondary Education Committee and was sent to the full House for consideration.

HB 232 (Davis, M., D-Chicago) prohibits the State Board of Education and school boards from establishing, maintaining, or in any way supporting any virtual schools or virtual classes for

elementary and secondary students. **The bill was held** in the House Elementary and Secondary Education Committee after lengthy testimony and discussion.

HB 305 (Hamos, D-Evanston) provides that suspension or expulsion of a student may include a prohibition from being present on school grounds and within 100 feet of school grounds. Currently, the prohibition is only from being present on school grounds. **The bill was approved** by the House of Representatives and was sent to the Senate for consideration.

HB 357 (Chapa LaVia, D-Aurora) extends the expiration date for school district interfund transfers from June 30, 2007 to June 30, 2010. **The bill was approved** by the House of Representatives and was sent to the Senate for consideration.

HB 382 (Flowers, D-Chicago) requires the Chicago Board of Education to adopt policies and rules requiring that all students wash their hands with an antiseptic soap before consuming any meal at school. **The bill was approved** by the House of Representatives and was sent to the Senate for consideration.

HB 438 (Pritchard, R-Hinckley) provides that, in addition to providing for instruction in bullying prevention, each school district may make suitable provisions for instruction in gang resistance education and training in all grades and include such instruction in the courses of study regularly taught therein. **The bill was approved** by the House Elementary and Secondary Education Committee and was sent to the full House for consideration.

HB 518 (D'Amico, D-Chicago) provides that the Secretary of State may, without fee, allow the parent or guardian of a person under the age of 18 years, who holds a graduated driver's license or an instruction permit, to view the person's driving record online through a computer connection. **The bill was approved** by the House Drivers Education and Safety Committee and was sent to the full House for consideration.

HB 1030 (Pihos, R-Glen Ellyn) provides that the ISBE's annual report to the General Assembly and Governor shall include the total expenditures made by school districts on special education services, including a breakdown of State and federally reimbursed expenditures and non-reimbursed expenditures as reported by school districts and provides that a board of education shall file as an attachment to its annual budget a report that contains the total amount spent on special education services, including the expenditures reimbursed by the State and the expenditures not reimbursed by the State. **The bill was approved** by the House Elementary and Secondary Education Committee and was sent to the full House for consideration.

SB 46 (Garrett, D-Lake Forest) creates the Green Governments Illinois Act to provide for the creation of the Green Governments Coordinating Council. The Council would have the authority to solicit and receive grants to fulfill the Council's functions and to solicit, use, and publish advice and information to assist in the Council's duties. School districts would be able to share their environmentally friendly policies with others via a website managed by the Lieutenant Governor's office. **The bill was approved** by the Senate Environment and Energy Committee and was sent to the full Senate for consideration.

SB 138 (Cronin, R-Elmhurst) allows an income tax credit for each teachers who paid for classroom supplies out of their own pocket. The credit would be equal to 50% of the eligible classroom expenses made by the taxpayer during the taxable year, but the credit may not exceed \$500. **The bill was approved** by the Senate Revenue Committee and will be sent to the full Senate for consideration.

SB 143 (Collins, D-Chicago) would require non-public schools to perform the same background checks of employees as public schools now provide. **The bill was approved** by the Senate Education Committee and will be sent to the full Senate for consideration.

BILLS SCHEDULED FOR COMMITTEE NEXT WEEK

SENATE LOCAL GOVERNMENT COMMITTEE

Wednesday, February 28, 1:00, Room 409, State Capitol

SB 232 (Lauzen, R-Aurora) creates the Development Impact Fee Authorization for Local Governments Act to authorize municipalities and counties to adopt ordinances to impose, on behalf of themselves or other local governments, development impact fees on new developments in the municipality or county.

HOUSE AGRICULTURE & CONSERVATION COMMITTEE

Wednesday, February 28, 2:00 p.m., Room 122 B, State Capitol

HB 425 (Coulson, R-Glenview) requires that the person a school district designates to ensure that integrated pest management practices are being followed, attend a training program. It also provides that the written notification provided to parents and guardians of students and employees who have registered to receive such notification prior to the application of pesticides to school or day care center property must be given at least 2 and no more than 30 (now, at least 2) business days before application of the pesticide.

SENATE TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE

Wednesday, February 28, 2:50 p.m., Room 400, State Capitol

SB 118 (Silverstein, D-Chicago) requires all school buses to be equipped with seat belts.

SB 172 (Cullerton, D-Chicago) makes various changes regarding: driver education requirements (deletes the provision allowing for proficiency examinations for practice driving); graduated driver's licenses (extends the use of the graduated license for those over 18 years old under certain circumstances); instruction permits for minors (imposes a curfew for driving with a permit – not after 10:00 p.m. Sunday-Thursday and not after 11:00 p.m. Friday and Saturday); curfews for drivers under a specified age (under age 18, same curfew applies as for permit drivers); the number of passengers under a specified age allowed in a vehicle driven by a newly licensed driver under a certain age (only one person under the age of 20 is allowed in the car with a driver on operating with a graduated drivers license); and other changes regarding drivers licenses.

HOUSE ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY EDUCATION COMMITTEE

Thursday, March 1, 8:00 a.m., Room 114, State Capitol

HB 816 (Coulson) provides that when a child who is eligible for special education reaches the majority age of 18 years, rights accorded to the child's parents transfer to the child.

HB 817 (Coulson), in the definition of "children with disabilities", provides that an eligible student who requires continued public school educational experience to facilitate his or her successful transition and integration into adult life is eligible for special education services through age 21, inclusive, which, for purposes of the Article, means the day before the student's 22nd birthday.

HB 877 (Dugan, D-Bradley) requires the Capital Development Board to establish a written procedure for disbursement of school construction project grant funds, which shall incorporate the requirement that school construction projects of school districts that do not receive a school construction project grant award in a fiscal year due to lack of adequate appropriations shall be placed ahead of any new school construction projects that are approved for grant awards in following fiscal years.

HB 1141 (Jefferson, D-Rockford) requires the ISBE to establish and administer a program that provides stipends to teachers who choose to teach at hard-to-staff public schools in this State. Under

the program, if a teacher agrees to teach at a hard-to-staff school for 5 years, the teacher is entitled to a \$20,000 stipend each year for those 5 years. "Hard to staff schools" is not defined in the bill.

HB 1142 (Jefferson) provides that in the awarding of grants for truants' alternative and optional education programs, the chronic truant and dropout rates of the areas served by the projects as compared to State averages must be taken into consideration first, and the population of the areas served, striving to serve as many students as possible with the funds available, must be taken into consideration second.

HB 1143 (Jefferson), in scheduling teachers' institute days, requires that election and primary election days must be used before other days.

HB 1226 (Bellock, R-Hinsdale), for kindergarten through 8th grade, requires a school board to equip all computers that students have access to, with software that seeks to prevent minors from gaining access to explicit sexual materials or to obtain Internet connectivity from an Internet service provider that provides filter services to limit access to explicit sexual materials.

HB 1287 (Davis, M.) provides that if a school board, in scheduling breaks as part of a full year school plan, schedules a break that exceeds 9 consecutive days, the school district shall forfeit 20% of its general State aid.

HB 1330 (Yarbrough, D-Chicago) creates the Ensuring Success in School Law to ensure that youth who are parents, expectant parents, or the victims of domestic or sexual violence are identified by schools in a manner respectful of their privacy and safety, treated with dignity and regard, and provided the protection, instruction, and related support services necessary to enable them to meet State educational standards and successfully attain a high school diploma. The bill contains many new burdensome requirements for school districts.

HB 1333 (Flowers) requires a teacher to be dismissed if the teacher uses profanity towards a student.

HB 1335 (Flowers) provides that a school board shall require that schools provide recess for all students in kindergarten through grade 6. The recess must be at least 10 minutes in length and must occur once in the middle of each morning and once in the middle of each afternoon during which school is in session.

HB 1336 (Flowers) requires a school board to make available in the schools for purchase by students nutritious, low-fat foods and drinks at all times when food and drink are available for purchase by students during the regular school day, which shall include without limitation low-fat milk, 100% natural fruit juices, and water and low-fat dairy products and fresh or dried fruit.

HB 1337 (Flowers) prohibits mandate waiver requests from laws or rules pertaining to physical education or recess.

HB 1338 (Flowers) requires a school board to post in each school building the date of the last fire alarm inspection at the building and the capacity of the building.

HB 1339 (Flowers) allows children who have attended preschool and will attain the age of 5 years on or before December 1 of the year of the 2007-2008 school term to attend school upon commencement of such term.

HB 1340 (Flowers) requires that a human immunodeficiency virus (HIV) test be included as a part of the student health examination required under the School Code.

HB 1341 (Flowers) requires that a human immunodeficiency virus (HIV) test be included as a part of the student health examination required under the School Code if the child is 13 years of age or older.

HB 1342 (Flowers) requires that a school board require students who participate in an interscholastic athletic program to undergo an electrocardiogram (EKG) test.

SENATE REVENUE COMMITTEE

Thursday, March 1, 1:00 p.m., Room 400, State Capitol

SB 1152 (Clayborne, D-E. St. Louis) exempts from the definition of "aggregate extension" in the Property Tax Extension Limitation Law (PTELL), all contributions to a pension fund.

HOUSE LABOR COMMITTEE

Thursday, March 1, 2:00 p.m., Room 118, State Capitol

HB 411 (Beiser, D-Alton) amends the Organ Donor Leave Act to authorize leave to donate blood for up to one hour *or more* (now, up to one hour) every 56 days.

HB 1347 (Hannig, D-Litchfield) adds burdensome new restrictions for a school board entering into a contract with a third party to perform non-instructional services. A 90 day written notice would have to be given to the educational support personnel (ESP) (instead of the current 30 day notice); the contract could not be entered into during the term of a collective bargaining agreement; the third party would have to provide comparable insurance and benefits and would have to list the number of employees who would be providing the service along with the wages that would be paid to those employees; the board would have to provide a cost comparison before entering into the contract; at least two public hearings would have to be held to discuss the contract; and the third party would have to offer any school district employees that would be laid-off an employment position.

SENATE EDUCATION COMMITTEE

Thursday, March 1, 2:30 p.m., Room 212, State Capitol

SB 48 (Maloney, D-Chicago) increases the threshold required for school districts to competitively bid contracts from \$10,000 to \$25,000. It makes changes concerning the exceptions to this requirement, including an exception for contracts for services of corporations possessing a high degree of professional skill where ability and fitness play an important part, contracts for food services, and contracts for utilities and related services when the cost is less than that offered by a local distribution company. For contracts for repair, maintenance, remodeling, renovation, or construction – it increases the threshold from \$20,000 to \$50,000.

SB 79 (Garrett) provides that, in the development of the individualized education program for a student who has a disability on the autism spectrum, the IEP team shall consider and shall specifically address certain factors.

SB 122 (Garrett) adds school counselor and school counselor intern to the list of professions included in the definition of "professional worker" under the law regarding special education.

SB 194 (Sieben, R-Geneseo) with respect to transitional assistance payments, provides that the ISBE shall adjust prior year information for the transitional assistance calculations in the event of the creation or reorganization of a school district under certain circumstances.

SB 266 (Crotty, D-Oak Forest) makes changes regarding the reimbursement for special education services provided in classes for children from orphanages, foster family homes, children's homes.

SB 397 (Demuzio, D-Carlinville), in the definition of "children with disabilities", provides that an eligible student who requires continued public school educational experience to facilitate his or her successful transition and integration into adult life is eligible for special education services through age 21, inclusive, which, for purposes of the Article, means the day before the student's 22nd birthday.

SB 423 (Sandoval, D-Chicago) allows the respective school boards of Berwyn North School District 98, Berwyn South School District 100, Cicero School District 99, and J.S. Morton High School District 201 to withdraw from the jurisdiction and authority of the trustees of schools of Cicero Township and the township treasurer.

SB 424 (Delgado, D-Chicago) provides that if a pupil successfully completes one or more of the courses required as a prerequisite to receiving a high school diploma before entering high school, then the pupil shall be given high school credit for that course.

SB 446 (Martinez, D-Chicago) makes changes to the "Grow Your Own Teacher" education act.

SB 505 (Cullerton) provides that the School Construction Grant Program grant index may be increased by 0.05 for school construction projects that receive certification from the United States Green Building Council's Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design Green Building Rating System, the Green Building Initiative's Green Globes Green Building Rating System, or green building standards approved by the Capital Development Board.

SB 671 (Maloney) sets forth a definition for legal responsibility regarding legal custody as it pertains to district residency.

SB 746 (Demuzio) extends the technology immersion pilot project (the program supplying laptop computers for 7th graders) for another three years.

SB 1157 (Burzynski, R-Sycamore) requires a school board to adopt a dress code policy to apply to students beginning with the 2007-2008 school year.

SB 1361 (Crotty), regarding the issuance of bonds for paying orders for the wages of teachers or for the payment of claims against the district, adds that the bonds may also be used for reimbursing the district for property tax refunds.

SB 1557 (Frerichs, D-Champaign) requires a driver education course to include classroom instruction on distracted driving as a major traffic safety issue.

SB 1560 (Demuzio) provides that if the hours of an educational support personnel employee works are reduced for certain reasons, then written notice must be given to the employee and that if a reduction in hours is due to an unforeseen reduction in the student population, then the written notice must be mailed and given to the employee at least 5 days (instead of 30 days) before the hours are reduced. With respect to ESPs removed or dismissed for certain reasons, the bill provides that if a school board has any vacancies for the following school term or within one calendar year from the beginning of the following school term, the positions thereby becoming available within a specific category of position shall be tendered to the employees who were removed or dismissed from that category or any other category of position (now, just from that category), so far as they are qualified to hold the positions.

SB 1720 (Munoz, D-Chicago) changes the provisions requiring a school district to furnish to the regional superintendent a list of the names of students that have been removed from the school's attendance rolls.