



OHIO EDUCATION ASSOCIATION

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OEA Legislative Watch

An OEA Newsletter

Do you know that the political process affects virtually everything in your school day?

Take action — Become an OEA Member Lobbyist!

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Budget Bill (HB 59) Passes Senate and Now Heads to Conference Committee

Earlier this week, the Senate Finance Committee amended House Bill 59, the budget bill for FY 14 and FY 15. The bill passed the Senate Finance Committee this week with a party line vote of 9-4 and passed the Ohio Senate after lengthy debate by a vote of 23-10. The Senate-passed version of the bill makes positive changes to certain education-related issues. These include: reinstating current law regarding minimum salary and the salary schedule, making changes to teacher evaluation, defining a school week as five days and eliminating the Academic Distress Commission provision for manipulating student data. However, the bill falls short of removing the OEA-opposed new voucher program based on family income and the expansion of the ED Choice voucher program based on literacy performance.

Democrats offered OEA-supported amendments in Senate Finance Committee and on the floor that proposed eliminating the new voucher program, requiring a legislative school funding adequacy study and increasing charter school accountability. All of these amendments were tabled.

The budget bill will now head to a Conference Committee to address the differences between the House- and Senate-passed versions.

To read about detailed changes made to HB 59 by the Senate [click here](#).



House Bill 167 (“Columbus Plan”) Passed by Ohio House; Senate Hearings Underway

House Bill 167, sponsored by State Representatives Cheryl Grossman (R-Grove City) and Tracy Heard (D-Columbus), was recently introduced after months of deliberation by the Columbus Education Commission on how to best address the issue of improving education in the Columbus City Schools. The Columbus Education Association was represented on the Commission as various reform measures were considered. The bill contains several recommendations from the Commission’s final report that require legislative approval, including the following provisions:

- Requires a ballot issue where voters would approve or disapprove the creation of the position of an independent auditor for the Columbus City Schools.
- Requires a ballot issue where voters would approve or disapprove a levy of additional millage for Columbus City Schools that would grant the school board the authority to determine which charter schools to share the revenues with, if any.
- Authorizes the Mayor and Columbus City Council to sponsor charter schools that are located in the Columbus City Schools.

The following two amendments were made to House Bill 167 in the House Education Committee:


- Provides the independent auditor the authority to audit funds that a partnering charter school receives from the district's partnering charter schools’ fund.
- Requires the report of the independent auditor to be submitted to the General Assembly.


The Ohio House passed House Bill 167 on May 29, 2013 by a vote of 79-15. An emergency clause was also approved 77-17, which will make the bill effective immediately upon being signed by the Governor. The Ohio Senate is currently holding hearings on House Bill 167, and a possible vote is scheduled for the week of June 10, 2013.

The Columbus Education Association supports the package contained in House Bill 167. As this legislation is the result of a local reform process, the OEA has been closely monitoring the bill as an “interested party” as it receives hearings in the Ohio General Assembly.

Hearing Held on So-Called “Right to Work” Legislation – House Bill 151 and House Joint Resolution 5

On June 4, 2013, the House Manufacturing and Workforce Development Committee held a hearing on House Bill 151 (R-Roegner) and House Joint Resolution 5 (R-Roegner/R-Maag), which are two of the three so-called “right-to-work” bills recently introduced in the House.





House Bill 151 applies to private sector employees, and House Joint Resolution (HJR) 5 would put a so-called “right to work” law on the ballot to be amended into the Ohio Constitution. HJR 5 would apply to both private and public sector workers. The third right-to-work bill, House Bill 152 (R-Maag), would apply to public employees like OEA members, but has yet to be scheduled for a hearing in the House State and Local Government Committee.

The hearing on House Bill 151 and HJR 5 was held in a packed hearing room. Several additional hearing rooms were made available for the overflow crowd to listen to the committee proceedings. The committee heard sponsor testimony from Rep. Kristina Roegner (R-Hudson) and Rep. Ron Maag (R-Lebanon). Attendees applauded Democratic opposition to the legislation while Republican committee members remained largely silent. After the committee hearing, Chairman Kirk Schuring (R-Canton) made a statement in which he stated that there would be no more hearings on either House Bill 151 or HJR 5. House Rules require at least one hearing on every bill introduced.

The Ohio Education Association and the We Are Ohio coalition will continue to strongly oppose House Bill 151, House Bill 152 and HJR 5. These so-called “right to work” bills are the latest attack on Ohio’s working families. Just like Senate Bill 5, these bills would hurt the middle class, provide less freedom in the workplace and make us all less safe.

