

DTU

Legislative Update

Week 2 January 27, 2020

Week Two, We're Coming for You

This was another busy week in the capitol. Is it only week two? The temperatures were freezing in Tallahassee. Did you hear about the falling iguanas in South Florida? We were, however, getting warm and fuzzy with legislators (ok most legislators) on the important business of funding our future.

You get a raise! You get a raise! We all get a raise!

Your FEA team in Tallahassee along with our amazing local advocates, including DTU, who traveled to Tallahassee to meet with legislators are continuing to beat the drum on the importance of raises for all of our educators – classroom teachers, prekindergarten teachers, reading, math and science coaches, support staff and everyone else who invests their time, effort and energy in helping children learn and grow – are included in the discussion when it comes to raises.

We need you at home sharing that message with legislators, and talking about the work you do and why you choose to invest in our kids every day.

We have seen the House PreK-12 Appropriations Subcommittee led by Chair Chris Latvala (R-Clearwater) proposed last week to sweep Best & Brightest bonus funds to propose a \$462.6 million increase in the Base Student Allocation (BSA) for the purposes of raises. We know that the Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on Education will meet Tuesday to present their budget proposal. And we will continue to work towards ensuring any policy that accompanies the budget regarding salaries is fair and equitable to not only classroom teachers but education staff professionals, is a permanent addition (salaries NOT BONUSES), and honors local control and the constitutional right to bargain.

Union Busting

It just wouldn't be a session without some anti-union bill moving through the legislature. In typical fashion, HB 1 filed by Rep. Jamie Grant (R-Tampa) is this year's union busting bill, aimed at all public sector unions – teachers, support staff, police, firefighters, etc. – with the goal of making it harder for your union to represent you. HB 1 was filed on the first day of the session and heard in its first committee of reference on Wednesday. The Oversight, Transparency & Public Management Subcommittee was a lively place to be, as the sponsor stated at the

podium about how bad “some” unions are, and how we just need to protect our workers who maybe don’t know what they are doing by joining a union.

We thank the amazing Representatives Eskamani (D-Orlando), J. Fernandez (D-Coral Gables) and Good (D-Sarasota) who asked some really great questions, offered amendments (they failed) and debated valiantly against the legislation. The bill passed 9-5. We also thank Representatives Dubose (D-Ft. Lauderdale) and Plasencia (R-Titusville) who joined Eskamani, Fernandez and Good in voting against the bill. Currently the bill applies to all public sector unions with no carve outs.”

While of some comfort, the three legislators who debated in favor of the bill did so by expressing concerns with the legislation in its current form. The bill heads next to the State Affairs Committee and could be on the agenda as early as next week.

[Bills](#)

As we told you last week, we encourage you to check out the completely redesigned 2020 Legislative Session page on the FEA website to track important bills and get talking points as well. We wanted to highlight a few key pieces of legislation below that should be of interest.

- *SB 486 by Senator Bradley which repeals the Best & Brightest bonuses for both teachers and principals*
- *HB 643 by Representative Williams which creates a remedy to ensure inclusion of prekindergarten teachers in the definition of Instructional Personnel*
- *HD 819 by Representative Goff-Marcil and SB 1320 by Senator Cruz requires a university to waive the cost of fees for certain Graduate Assistants*
- *SB 1364 by Senator J. Rodriguez proposes an amendment to the State Constitution, limiting DOE’s ability to interfere in collective bargaining between the local union and school boards to set wages, hours, and terms & conditions for school employees*
- *HB 1359 by Representative Cortes provides the opportunity for annual contract teachers to receive a multi-year contract*

[Are you coming to Tallahassee?](#)

We are working closely with the AFL-CIO Working Families Lobby Corps to lobby legislators in Tallahassee on pro-public education issues and against anti-union legislation. If you haven’t already, be sure to let us know when to expect you via AFL-CIO Working Families Lobby Corps “I’m coming” tab, and book your hotels ASAP.

If you have any questions about coming to Tallahassee please don’t hesitate to contact Tina Dunbar at Tina.Dunbar@floridaea.org. Remember that your visit to Tallahassee should include proper capitol attire – suits or slacks and button up shirts and ties for the men; dresses or slacks and blouses for the ladies; and especially comfortable dress shoes for everyone. We also recommend you bring a light jacket or sweater, and an umbrella. Tallahassee weather is notoriously unpredictable for winter, not to mention committee room temperatures!

Questions? Call PPA at 850-224-2078.