

The

SMITH HILL REPORT



PUBLISHED BY THE RHODE ISLAND FEDERATION OF TEACHERS & HEALTH PROFESSIONALS/AFT, AFL-CIO

Contract Continuation Considered

On Thursday, March 5, 2015, the RIFTHP testified in support of legislation that would ensure that the terms and conditions of a collective bargaining agreement continues until a new agreement is reached by the parties. The bill, [H5475](#) by Rep. Carnevale, applies to both teacher contracts and municipal contracts, which includes school support staff in our traditional public schools.

Rep. Carnevale introduced the bill by arguing that the bill would not benefit either unions or employers. He recounted his years of experience in police contract negotiations for the Fraternal Order of Police in Providence in which management never imposed changes when a collective bargaining agreement expired.

RIFTHP lobbyist James Parisi began his testimony by reminding the House Labor Committee that legal precedent on this issue was settled by the Rhode Island Supreme Court in 1993 in a case involving the Warwick Teachers' Union. During the contract dispute of the early 1990's, the Warwick School Committee imposed new contract terms when the current contract expired. Among the changes was an increase in class size and the cessation of processing grievances. The Union won a case filed with the Rhode Island State Labor Relations Board which argued that teacher contracts continued in full force and effect until a new agreement was negotiated. On appeal, both the Superior Court and the RI Supreme Court supported the Labor Board decision. The more recent East Providence teacher case was never appealed to the Supreme Court. Thus, Parisi argued, the legislation merely codifies legal precedent

March 9, 2015

In This Issue

- [Contract Continuation Considered](#)
- [Voucher Bill Introduced](#)
- [Bill Introductions](#)
- [Senate/House Contacts](#)

[Sign up here to receive the Smith Hill Report Directly!](#)

[Senate Contacts](#)

[House Contacts](#)

[Senate/House Committee Assignments](#)

established twenty years ago.

Joining Parisi at the table testifying in support of the bill was Pat Crowley of the NEA/RI. This was his last bill hearing as the NEA/RI lobbyist as he has taken a new position with the NEA national organization. Also offering support for the bill was Jim Cenerini of Council 94 and Mark Mancinho of the AFL-CIO.

Opposing the bill was Dan Beardsley of the League of Cities and Towns.



Voucher Bill Introduced

Legislation to implement a costly school voucher program for public and private schools was introduced last week. The House bill, sponsored by Rep. Raymond Hull, is [H5790](#). The Senate bill [S0607](#) is sponsored by Sen. Marc Cote. The RIFTHP will be providing information to describe the significant threat these bills are to the well-being of our traditional public school districts.

Bill Introductions

Teacher Terminations – Full Board

([S0201](#) DiPalma, Senate Education)

The RIFTHP opposes this act which would provide that teacher dismissal cases may be heard by less than an entire school board.

Charter School Funding

([S0202](#) Gallo, Senate Finance)

The RIFTHP supports this resolution which would change the method in determining the local share of the per pupil amount for each student attending the charter public school by allowing deductions for allocations not born by the charter school based on uniform chart of accounts data. Local district payments to charter public schools would be made at the end of the district's school quarter for those students enrolled in the charter school during the quarter.

Income Tax – Retirement Income Exemption

([S0210](#) Fogarty, Senate Finance)

The RIFTHP supports this act which would exempt from personal income tax social security benefits plus the first twenty-five thousand dollars (\$25,000) received from pensions, interest income, 401K plans and individual retirement accounts..

DD Funding - \$15,000,000

([S0214](#) Doyle, Senate Finance)

The RIFTHP supports this act which appropriates out of any money in the treasury not otherwise appropriated for the fiscal year 2015-2016, the sum of fifteen million dollars (\$15,000,000) to the Department of BHDDH, Division of Developmental Disabilities for services for the developmentally disabled.

Adjunct Faculty Medical Insurance

([S0233](#) Miller, Senate Health and Human Services)

LaborVision is seen on Cox
Ch. 14 and FioS Ch. 33

Tuesday @ 7PM

Thursday @ 7PM

Saturday @ 5PM

Coming Up

On Wednesday, March 11 at the Rise of the House, the House Finance Committee will consider [H5519](#) by Rep. Filippi, a resolution that would place a constitutional amendment on the ballot and allows the Governor to reduce or veto any item of appropriation in a bill presented to him or her.

The RIFTHP supports this act which would provide that adjunct faculty members at any state college or university who teach at least fifty percent (50%) of the hours regularly worked by full-time faculty in an academic semester would be eligible for the same state hospital care and surgical-medical service benefit as other state employees.

Student Suspensions

([S0299](#) *Pichardo, Senate Education*)

The RIFTHP opposes this act which would direct all school superintendents to review discipline data for their school district, to decide whether there is an unequal impact on students based on race, ethnicity, or disability status, and to respond to any disparity. Every school district would submit a report to the council on elementary and secondary education describing any action taken on the disparity. All such reports shall be public records. Also, student suspensions will not be served out of school unless the student's conduct meets certain standards.

Senate/House Contacts

To view a list of all 38 Senate members, including mail, phone and e-mail contact information, [click here](#).

To view a list of all 75 House members, including mail, phone and e-mail contact information, [click here](#).

This contact information will also be posted at the RIFTHP website at www.RIFTHP.org/GAInfo.

[Connect with us on](#)



[Click here to unsubscribe](#)

© **American Federation of Teachers, AFL-CIO.** © 2011

This e-mail and any attachments are confidential and are intended solely for the named addressee(s). If you are not a named addressee, you should not copy, alter, post, forward, distribute or disseminate the contents of the e-mail or attachments. Any views or opinions expressed are solely those of the individual and do not necessarily represent those of American Federation of Teachers (AFT).