West Virginia Legislative Brief: Commentary from Gil White 1/25/19

Friday, January 25, 2019

Legislative Action by the Numbers:

- 654 bills introduced in the House of Delegates
- 425 bills introduced in the State Senate
- 20 bills have passed the House of Delegates
- 21 bills have passed the State Senate

My View from the Capitol:

Today marks the 17th day of the 60-day Regular Legislative Session and it’s safe to assume the pace is in full swing. On Thursday, the highly anticipated Senate omnibus education reform bill was rolled out. This bill, as introduced, would provide the promised teachers pay raises, give increased flexibility to open charter schools and a requirement for teachers to sign off annually on union dues. It also attempts to address “differential pay,” allowing for higher wages for teaching fields considered crucial but difficult to fill. The proposed legislation would also allow teachers' personal days to be accumulated towards their retirement. This comprehensive legislation is expected to be highly debated as it moves through the legislative process. The stated goal is to reform our educational system, thus bringing up our national testing standards and scores in West Virginia.

In addition to the above pending legislation, the State Senate unanimously passed SB 1 which is aimed at steering more West Virginia students into vocational and technical fields. SB 1 would provide financial support for students pursuing associates degrees or certificates after they have pulled down all other available state and federal money. This legislation now is in the House Education Committee where it could receive favorable consideration in the House of Delegates.

Legislative Calendar - Important Days to Remember

First Day - January 9

20th Day - January 28 - Submission of Legislative Rule-Making Review Bills due

35th Day - February 12 - Last day to introduce bills in the House

41st Day - February 18 - Last day to introduce bills in the Senate

47th Day - February 24 - Bills due out of committee in house of origin to ensure three full days for readings

50th Day - February 27 - Last day to consider bills on third reading in house of origin. Does not apply to the budget bill or supplemental appropriation bills.

60th Day - March 9 - Adjournment at midnight

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