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Sent: Thursday, February 26, 2015 5:58 PM

To: Allen, Susan; Clasen, Michael; Coriell, Scott; Davis, Austin; Green, Geoff; Johnson, Harriet; Johnson, Justin; Kunin, Lisa; London, Sarah; Miller, Elizabeth; Miller, Lawrence; Mishaan, Jessica; Nease, Floyd; Richards, Alyson; Spaulding, Susan; Trombley, Shana; GPS; Byrne, Emily

Subject: Conf Exec Priv: Daily Legislative Report for Thursday, February 26

Thursday, February 26, 2015

House Reconvenes Friday at 9:30 a.m.

Senate Reconvenes Friday at 9:00 a.m.

Bill Passed ; Third Reading Tomorrow

- [H.272](#) An act relating to current use and technical tax changes.

Notice Calendar Today, Second Reading Tomorrow:

- [H.40](#) Establishing a renewable energy standard and energy transformation program

Bills Passed House Committee:

- [H.18](#), public records act exemptions, passed House Gov Ops.
- [H.117](#), VTA to PSD, passed House Commerce and Economic Development.

Bills Introduced

- [H.331](#) By Rep. Masland; An act relating to workers' compensation
- [H.332](#) By Rep. Botzow; An act relating to workers' compensation
- [H.333](#) By Rep. Botzow; An act relating to enhancing eligibility and work incentives for the Medicaid for Working Persons with Disabilities program
- [H.334](#) By Rep. Gage; An act relating to proof of Vermont residency for public assistance
- [H.335](#) By Rep. Botzow; An act relating to authorized sole contractors
- [H.336](#) By Rep. Stevens; An act relating to rental housing
- [H.337](#) By Rep. Gage; An act relating to repurchasing inventory of snowmobiles and all-terrain vehicles
- [H.338](#) By Rep. Botzow; An act relating to authorizing substitute collateral for mechanics' liens;
- [H.339](#) By Rep. Pearson; An act relating to paid family leave
- [H.340](#) By Rep. Grad; An act relating to creating an alternate income sensitivity system

Bills Released for Introduction But Not Yet Introduced

- [H.341](#) An act relating to a role for municipal government in the siting of small solar net metering systems
- [H.342](#) An act relating to exempting temporary yard sale signs from the sign law
- [H.343](#) An act relating to the provision of traumatic brain injury services to family members of active duty Service members
- [H.344](#) Representative Krowinski ; An act relating to the Needle Education, Exchange, and Disposal Task Force creating a statewide program

- [H.345](#) Representative Rachelson ; An act relating to creating a statewide school district similar to the education governance model in Hawaii
- [H.346](#) Representative Rachelson; An act relating to requiring school districts to count average daily membership twice annually
- [H.347](#) An act relating to election day registration
- [H.348](#) An act relating to establishing the Training Center Governance Committee
- [H.349](#) An act relating to the award of attorney's fees in environmental actions
- [H.350](#) An act relating to commercial haulers of solid waste

SENATE:

Passed Senate Committee; notice Friday, Second reading March 11:

- [S.105](#), relating to home improvement contracts, passed Senate Economic Development Committee.

Passed Third Reading:

- [S.9](#), child protection bill, passed third reading unanimously by voice.

Passed Second Reading; Third Readings Friday:

- [S.7](#) An act relating to bail determinations concerning a defendant charged with lewd and lascivious conduct with a child.
- [S.13](#) An act relating to the Vermont Sex Offender Registry.
- [S.71](#) An act relating to governance of the Vermont State Colleges
- [S.97](#) An act relating to taxation of prewritten software.
- [H.194](#) An act relating to approval of amendments to the charter of the Town of St. Johnsbury.

Committee Bill for Second Reading CONSIDERATION POSTPONED UNTIL MARCH 11, 2015

- [S.108](#) An act relating to repealing the sunset on provisions pertaining to patient choice at end of life

Bills Released for Introduction But Not Yet Introduced

- [S.120](#) Sponsor(s) Sen. Norm McAllister & Sen. John Rodgers An act relating to suspicion-based substance abuse testing and treatment for recipients of public assistance
- [S.121](#) An act relating to passing and yielding to vulnerable users
- [S.122](#) An act relating to miscellaneous changes to laws related to motor vehicles, motorboats, and other vehicles

COMMITTEE INTEL:

House Ed bill, out 11-0, rough rough rough summary (still waiting for bill to be finished, leg council is writing up a few pieces still)

- Nothing limiting tuition dollars from going out of state
- Small schools grant phased out except if geographic necessity or AOE determines you meet EQS and if you participated in merger study.
- Yield is in
- Establishes process to move towards "Integrated education systems" (delving into details now)

- Establishes base rate for the year (and other complicated tax stuff that I'm getting details of now)
- Per pupil amount needs to be in language for budget vote (greater transparency linking budgets to tax rates)
- AOE to study no-strike/collective bargaining
- AOE to study Principal/Superintendent roles/responsibilities
- Cuts off phantom pupil "tail"
- Cap is in, but it's NOT detailed and it's a very hard cap: if you go over 2% of the previous year's per pupil spending your budget automatically fails. No waiver provision. Sunsets in Dec, 2018.

Statehouse Security:

- House Institutions seems poised to do something.
- The committee considered an idea to bring statehouse complex under public safety.
- Trooper Birmingham testified this would take about 10 troopers, 100k a piece.

Water Quality:

- **House Agriculture:** The committee has a new draft that strips out funding and current use penalty. It includes a memo on funding. House Ways and Means is fine with the current use piece so it could be added back in there.
- **Senate:** Sen. Campbell and Starr are working on a per-acre fee on farmland. Sen. Starr has been very consistent in his support for this.

Ways and Means: Budget Gap/Reform:

Rep. Ancel announced that they should be thinking about the budget gap in four ways:

- New taxes - Not discussed today.
- Increasing rates - only discussed in the context of would be able to get money for FY16 budget for 2016 instead of having to make income tax changes retroactive to 2015.
- Income tax reform
- Sales tax: Broadness of Vermont's food exemption (i.e. sugar-sweetened beverages)

House Appropriations – Current Use:

- Rep. Alison Clarkson reviewed the bill with the Appropriations Committee and the major changes, which include 10% FMV land use change tax penalty- this penalty is shared with the Ed Fund, the Easy out, Study committee looking at municipal reimbursement rates, and guidance by PVR to listers for assessing land enrolled in current use.
- It was alluded to that this replaces the Governor's proposal, which included the moratorium and the 30% valuation on farm buildings.
- It was mentioned that Louis Porter, Commissioner of Fish and Wildlife was proposing a tiered approach on posted lands. The committee thought that some examples on how the proposed land use change tax plays out on an actual parcel would help provide illustration when Rep. Clarkson report out this afternoon.

Vermont Worker Center Presser

- The plan presented is worked into a bill sponsored by Susan Davis and will be out for legal council today

- Claimed to have used the gov's plan's data (despite thinking that the numbers were overly conservative in many places such as "drug purchases") and found a way to make Financing Plan for Universal Publically Financed Health Care actually work
- Presented a letter from over 100 economist say that a publically financed system is not only rational, equitable, and possible, but advantageous to treat healthcare as a public good citing worldwide evidence
- Plan heavily rely on taxing unearned income and those earning over \$200k
- The plan focusses heavily on equitability and boasts such claims as the middle class, paying 40% less, 60% businesses paying about 4%
- They attribute this to grading the tax plan based on business size
- This was the first look at the plan and they have no feedback from businesses what-so-ever

House Health care

On sugar Sweetened Beverage tax

Positions on the bill: Committee ran out of time for everyone to speak, with the intention to finish tomorrow. It is 6 in favor, 1 opposed as follows

- Donahue - yes
- Cage – no
- Porier – yes – also mentioned not supporting payroll tax
- Dakin – yes
- Morris – yes
- Pearson – Yes
- Woodward – yes, bad progressive tax, but cares more about health

Issues such as

- 2cent/oz. not being enough
- issues with the NH border towns – most agreed that individual's won't go out of state as these are often "impulse buys"
- the general consensus of the public health community is sugar is the new tobacco

Laura Gray

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