

Latest Developments from the Connecticut General Assembly: February 9th Public Hearing (and wage/hour bills)

Working Together

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On **Thursday, February 9, 2017 (weather permitting)**, the General Assembly's **Labor and Public Employees Committee** will conduct a public hearing on the following proposed bills, many of which concern "wage and hour" issues:

S.B. No. 13 AN ACT CONCERNING THE MINIMUM FAIR WAGE. This proposed bill would increase the minimum wage from the current \$10.10/hour to \$11.00/hour on January 1, 2018, \$12.00/hour on January 1, 2019, \$13.00/hour on January 1, 2020, \$14.00/hour on January 1, 2021, and \$15.00/hour on January 1, 2022. Thereafter, the minimum wage would be subject to annual indexing/adjustment for inflation.

H.B. No. 6208 AN ACT INCREASING THE MINIMUM WAGE. This proposed bill is almost identical to S.B. Bill 13, above, and would similarly increase the minimum wage to \$15.00/hour over the next five years.

Proposed H.B. No. 5149 AN ACT CONCERNING CERTAIN MINIMUM FAIR WAGE PROVISIONS. Conversely, this proposed bill would revise the "learners, beginners and persons under 18" exception to the minimum wage so as to instead apply the exception to persons under 19 years of age **and** to all such covered persons who work 1,000 or fewer hours per year (as opposed to the first 200 hours of such persons' employment).

Proposed H.B. No. 5591 AN ACT CONCERNING PAY EQUITY IN THE WORKFORCE. This proposed bill would require all employers (public and private sector) to provide equal pay to employees in the same workplace who perform "comparable" duties. There are no specifics at this point in time in this broadly stated proposal.

Proposed H.B. No. 6202 AN ACT CONCERNING UNEMPLOYMENT COMPENSATION. This proposed bill would increase the wage threshold for a person's eligibility for unemployment benefits from \$600 per "base period" to \$2,500 per "base period".

Proposed H.B. No. 6219 AN ACT CONCERNING COMMUNITY REENTRY BY PERSONS WHO WERE INCARCERATED. This proposed bill would provide persons recently released from incarceration with "enhanced employment opportunities", and also would provide tax incentives to employers who provide such employment opportunities.

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Proposed H.B. No. 5590 AN ACT CREATING A TASK FORCE TO IMPROVE THE WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT SYSTEM IN THE STATE OF CONNECTICUT. As the title suggests, this proposed bill would establish a task force to study the effectiveness, impact, and cohesiveness of workforce development programs and initiatives in the state.

The hearing on the above proposed bills will take place at **12:00 P.M.** in **Room 1C** of the **Legislative Office Building**.

To repeat my standard warning: The fact that a public hearing has been scheduled on these bills is not necessarily an indication that the Committee will pass them, but it is at least an indication that they are under serious consideration. When these bills have been fully drafted, and if they advance toward a vote by the Committee, we will provide more detail as to their contents.

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