

Latest Developments from the Connecticut General Assembly: January 31st Public Hearing

Working Together

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On **Tuesday, January 31, 2017**, the General Assembly's **Labor and Public Employees Committee** will conduct a public hearing on the following proposed bills:

Proposed H.B. No. 5151 **AN ACT CONCERNING TIMETABLES FOR MUNICIPAL BINDING ARBITRATION**. This proposed bill would require all municipal employers and unions to complete negotiations within one year from the date that binding arbitration is imposed by the State.

Proposed H.B. No. 5210 **AN ACT CONCERNING VARIOUS PAY EQUITY AND FAIRNESS MATTERS**. This proposed bill would a) prohibit employers from requiring a prospective employee's wage and salary history before making an employment offer, b) prohibit employers from using an employee's previous wage or salary history as a defense in an equal pay lawsuit, c) provide an employer an affirmative defense in an equal pay lawsuit if, within three years prior to commencement of the lawsuit, the employer completed a good faith self-evaluation of its pay practices and can demonstrate that reasonable progress has been made toward eliminating gender-based wage differentials, and d) protect seniority pay differentials from adverse adjustments for time spent on leave due to pregnancy-related conditions or protected parental FMLA leave.

Proposed H.B. No. 5278 **AN ACT CONCERNING PAID SICK LEAVE FOR EMERGENCY MEDICAL DISPATCHERS AND CALL RECEIVING OPERATORS**. This proposed bill would require employers to provide paid sick leave to emergency medical dispatchers and call receiving operators.

Proposed H.B. No. 5284 **AN ACT CONCERNING DRUG AND ALCOHOL TESTING OF AN EMPLOYEE**. This proposed bill would define the "reasonable suspicion" required for a private sector employer to test an employee for alcohol or drug use. (However, the bill does not actually set forth what that definition would be.)

Proposed H.B. No. 5286 **AN ACT CONCERNING OVERTIME PAY EXEMPTIONS FOR HIGHLY COMPENSATED EMPLOYEES**. This proposed bill would amend the state wage-hour laws so as to incorporate the overtime pay exemptions for highly compensated employees that exist under the federal Fair Labor Standards Act.

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Proposed H.B. No. 5376 **AN ACT CONCERNING REEVALUATION OF THE AMOUNT OF MEDICAL AND PRESCRIPTION DRUG COPAYS PAID BY STATE EMPLOYEES**. This proposed bill would require a reevaluation of the amount of medical and prescription drug copays paid by state employees and retirees under state employee health care plans, and that such amounts be revised to conform to industry standards. (Who knows how this would intersect with collective bargaining requirements and existing labor agreements.)

The hearing on the above proposed bills will take place at **11:00 A.M.** in **Room 2E** 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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