

They're Back! What Should Employers Expect from the 2018 Connecticut General Assembly Session?

Working Together

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By Mark Sommaruga

On February 7, the 2018 session of the Connecticut General Assembly began. The session is scheduled to adjourn on May 9, 2018. Numerous proposed bills affecting Connecticut employers and employees will be unleashed during the session, most of which will never see the light of day.

The Labor and Public Employees Committee will be where the action initially occurs. Hearings on those bills deemed worthy by the Committee will likely take place later in February and early March. While not yet firmly scheduled, the deadline for the Committee to approve and “forward” bills out of Committee will be sometime in mid-March. Bills affecting labor and employment issues may also emerge from other committees (such as the Judiciary Committee).

While it is always difficult to forecast with certainty what the General Assembly will contemplate, especially since there is a close balance between the two major political parties, legislation concerning the following matters may receive serious consideration:

- 1) revisions to the Connecticut Family and Medical Leave Act, including a program of paid FMLA leave;
- 2) increases to the minimum wage and efforts to increase penalties for employers of “low wage” workers who violate wage and hour laws;
- 3) restrictions on employers inquiring about a job applicant’s prior salary history;
- 4) gender pay “equity”;
- 5) revisions to sexual harassment training requirements for employers;
- 6) expansion of paid sick leave; and
- 7) workers’ compensation coverage for severe emotional trauma;

Of course, the state’s continuing fiscal crisis (in an election year) and the close partisan divide in the General Assembly may have a cooling effect with respect to the advancement of traditionally “pro-labor” or “progressive” legislation.

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Working Together will follow the action at the General Assembly and report on any significant developments as they may occur. There is always the potential for last minute surprises, including bill provisions emerging with little or no debate. Stay tuned.

Posted in CT General Assembly (CGA), Leave, Workers' Compensation