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2009 Legislative Scoop Sheet

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From the Editor's Desk ~ by Katharine Bobel and Nilda Fernandez

On Thursday the Democrats unveiled their solution to the states budget crisis. They are saying that the solution to solving the \$8 billion deficit is to raise revenue. This increase would include an increase in the income tax for joint filers, a temporary surcharge on corporate taxes, and raising the cigarette tax. The Governor disagrees with the Democrats proposed solution because she wants to cut more spending.

We had wonderful turnout at our 1st Annual Jane Addams event. Thank you to our Keynote Speaker Miles Rapoport, as well as our Reaction Panelists Fernando Betancourt and Urania Petit.

Upcoming Events

The 13th Annual Campaign School: Friday, April 17th and Saturday, April 18th from 9:00am-4:00pm.

SB 15 "An Act Providing In-State Tuition to Children of Immigrants" ~ by Nilda Fernandez

To date nothing new has happened in the Joint Committee on Higher Education and Employment Advancement on the in-state tuition bill. You may contact your legislator or the Joint Committee at 240-0280 with questions or concerns. Although on the Federal level there appears to be some progress in regards to this bill.

24/7 Staffing at Domestic Violence Shelters ~ by Robin Kraemer

CCADV (Connecticut Coalition Against Domestic Violence) has stopped following the 24/7 Staffing at Domestic Violence Shelters bill because nothing new has happened regarding this bill and it appears to be dead. CCADV has also been following **HB 6494 AN ACT CONCERNING TEEN DATING VIOLENCE EDUCATION**. There was a public hearing on this bill about a month ago but to date nothing new has happened regarding this specific bill.

Universal Healthcare ~ by Courtney Cullinan

SB 678: AN ACT CONCERNING HEALTH CARE COST CONTAINMENT was voted out of the Public Health Committee on March 23, 2009. The main purpose of the bill is to reform the health care delivery system in order to provide better health outcomes for patients while containing the exponential growth in health care spending.

This legislation has three major public policy benefits for Connecticut:

- Improve the quality of healthcare and reduce healthcare costs for Connecticut patients
- Eliminate an unethical incentive for over-utilization of pathology services and skewing of physician judgment regarding lab referrals
- Ensure physician compliance with AMA ethics and coding policies.

On April 2, 2009 the bill was sent to the office of fiscal analysis. Here it will be reviewed and it will be determined whether or not to attach a "fiscal note" to the bill.

Establishing a Sexual Assault Forensic Examiners Program ~ by Kate Parker

HB 6361: An Act Concerning the Establishment of a Sexual Assault Forensic Examiners Program.

There are no new updates to report on HB6361. However, April is Sexual Assault Awareness Month and the Connecticut Sexual Assault Crisis Services has released both a fact sheet on HB6361 and a public service announcement on sexual violence on their website. Please visit www.connsacs.org

Anti-Discrimination – ~ by Caryn Lacedonia

A public hearing was held by the Judiciary Committee on Thursday, March 19, 2009 on **SB 6452, "An Act Concerning Discrimination"**. Connecticut is one of thirty seven states that does not have laws to protect transgender and gender non-conforming individuals from discrimination in housing, jobs, and employment. **The Anti-Discrimination Coalition is holding a Lobby Day at the Capitol on April 7th.** All are welcome.

Hearings and Events at the Legislative Office Building (LOB)

Don't forget to check the "Bulletin" online at <http://www.cga.ct.gov> for full details on daily hearings, events, committee meetings, and contact information.

Also be sure to check out <http://www.ctn.state.ct.us/> to view live events and archived resources on the CT Network.

NAHIPSW Resources

As always, feel free to contact us at the NAHIPSW with any information related questions regarding the legislative process, testifying, finding your legislators or questions related to legislation that is of interest to you or your clients.

Affordable/Supportive Housing ~ by Katharine Bobel

To date it appears that **HB 5071 AN ACT CONCERNING THE SUPPORTIVE HOUSING INITIATIVE** has died. There is still a possibility that this bills language can be written in as an amendment to another bill. I will continue to follow this bill and keep you up to date on any new information regarding this bill. The Housing Committee can be reached at 860-240-0340.

Multi-Level Licensure ~ by Sarah Chasse

In their final meeting before the JF (Joint Favorable) deadline, The Public Health Committee voted in favor of **H.B. 6676 An Act Concerning Licensure of Clinical Social Workers** with only two no votes and one member not voting. NASW/CT Executive Director Steve Karp, Lobbyist, and DPH (Department of Public Health) met and agreed on new language earlier in the week. The new language did not reach the committee in time for the JF Deadline vote, so the bill was reported out of committee with the understanding that amended language needs to be substituted along the way. The next stop is the Appropriations Committee, which will likely be a challenge as there is an initial cost to the bill even though the fees will equal the cost for the first two years. NASW/CT will need student's help to ensure that the bill makes it out of the next committee successfully. Please contact Sarah Chasse at NASW/CT (860)257-8066 if you are available to volunteer your time for this effort.

Electoral Reform ~ by Addie Sandler

HB 5082 An Act Concerning Election Day Registration and **HB 5012** An Act Implementing Early Voting in Connecticut are dead; however the concepts of the bills are included in other legislation **HB 6435** and **HJ 113** respectively. **HB 6435**, An Act Concerning Election Day Registration to promote voter participation permitting individuals to register and vote on the day of a regular election, was recently referred to the Office of Legislative Research and Office of Fiscal Analysis. **HJ 113** is a resolution proposing an amendment to the Constitution concerning the length of term for Members of the General Assembly and the committee substitute language includes language to allow early voting by absentee ballot. This bill was recently filed with the Legislative Commissioner's Office.



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