

LEGISLATIVE ALERT V
79TH SESSION OF THE NEVADA STATE LEGISLATURE
MONDAY, MARCH 13, 2017

The sixth week of the 79th Legislative Session is underway. The fifth week was quiet as it relates to bills that RPEN is tracking, however there was a legislative teleconference from the Public Employees' Benefits Program (PEBP) Board. As you know, Senate Bill 80, as it was introduced initially, seeks to move PEBP and Deferred Comp over to the Department of Administration. We have been hearing since then though that the Governor was going to come up with a replacement bill for SB 80. A BDR, 18-979, in fact did get introduced last week, although the language for the BDR is vague. During the March 9 PEBP teleconference meeting, PEBP Board Chair Patrick Cates, who also is Chair of the Department of Administration, discussed the differences between SB 80 and the new BDR. Cates said the new bill, when it is introduced, will seek to keep PEBP and Deferred Comp as separate agencies, although they would still be moved to the Department of Administration. He said a second change would be to remove the Local Representative on the PEBP Board and replace them with a representative from the Nevada System of Higher Education (NSHE). He said this bill would bring additional oversight to the PEBP Board, and cited the controversial issue from 2016 involving the PEBP Board award of an HMO contract that was later abandoned and the entire process begun again. He called that situation appalling. Several board members were relieved of their positions by the Governor stemming from the issue. Cates said the new bill will still allow for retirees in PEBP and the Medicare Exchange to have a full voice on issues impacting them. RPEN has gone on the record many times opposed to this bill, and did so again during the PEBP teleconference last week. Assembly Bill 71, that proposes reform of the Public Employees' Retirement System (PERS) to add a Hybrid/401K pension plan for new hires as well as existing employees, has still not been scheduled for a hearing. There was another bill, Senate Bill 217 from Senator Michael Roberson that would alter the make-up of the PERS Board to include members from the private sector who are not PERS participants. A similar bill in 2015, AB 3, was successfully turned away and RPEN will fight for the same outcome on this bill.

Efforts continued last week behind the scenes for RPEN's privacy bill. Lead Lobbyist Marlene Lockard arranged for a meeting with Senator Julia Ratti to discuss a bill Senator Ratti will carry. Another meeting also took place last week with Assemblywoman Maggie Carlton involving a resolution to escalating healthcare costs for non-state PEBP participants known as "orphans". Carlton said during the meeting she would be conferring with her staff and the LCB to come up with the best possible scenario to take care of this dwindling group.

At the end of week 5, there were 279 Assembly Bills and 261 Senate Bills as well as 1,145 Bill Draft Requests. We will continue monitoring those and report on them in our weekly alerts. We still encourage our members to sign in to the "Share Your Opinion" page at the Nevada Legislative website at <https://www.leg.state.nv.us/App/Opinions/79th2017/A/> or contact your state representatives one-on-one either through in-person contact, email, phone call or letters to let them know your thoughts on the issues we are concerned with.

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