

LEGISLATIVE ALERT X
79TH SESSION OF THE NEVADA STATE LEGISLATURE
MONDAY, APRIL 17, 2017

The 11th week of the 79th Legislative Session is underway with one important deadline passed, and another around the corner in a matter of days.

Bills (those that are not exempt) needed to be passed out of their committee of origin by Friday, April 14. Among the many bills that did not receive action in committee were several bills RPEN had been tracking that involved so-called “reforms” for the Nevada Public Employees’ Retirement System (PERS). They include Assembly Bill 71 and Senate Bill 297 that had similar language seeking to add a 401K Hybrid Pension Plan to PERS for new hires. Both bills are shown to be exempt so their future are still in question. Another Senate Bill, SB 217, also failed to be heard before the April 14 deadline. SB 217 looked to bring on representatives to the PERS Retirement Board from the private sector.

Many other bills failed to meet the deadline, but the next deadline is April 25 when bills that made the first cut must pass from one house to the other. A couple of bills RPEN has been watching very closely are in this group and include Senate Bill 384. This is a privacy bill brought forth by Sparks Senator Julia Ratti at RPEN’s request. As we’ve discussed previously, SB 384 sprung out of another proposal by the late Senator Debbie Smith during the 2015 session. It seeks to clarify what is, and is not public information relating to public employees. It has been heard and was do-passed out of the Senate Government Affairs Committee March 31, but it still must make it past the April 25 deadline to keep alive.

Another bill we’re watching and testifying on is Senate Bill 502, formerly known as Senate Bill 80. This bill was heard a week ago and was do-passed on Friday, April 14. SB 502 was amended to keep two retiree representatives on the Public Employees’ Benefits Program (PEBP) as well as add two classified reps on the board. As originally introduced, SB 502 also sought to add another NSHE rep on the PEBP Board, and looked to move the Quality Control Officer at PEBP under the Executive Officer’s jurisdiction. The amendments reached through several meetings between RPEN’s Lead Lobbyist Marlene Lockard along with a rep from NSHE, Kent Ervin, and AFSCME’s Retiree Lobbyist Priscilla Maloney, sought to

keep the QCO position under the Director of Administration jurisdiction. That Director, Patrick Cates, who worked with Lockard, Maloney and Ervin, also serves as Chair of the current PEBP Board. Another amendment RPEN sought was to remove former PEBP Executive Officer Jim Wells, who is now the State's Finance Director, from his existing position on the PEBP Board. SB 502 also must now pass the April 25 deadline so we will continue monitoring SB 502 and SB 384, and encourage our members to "share their opinions" on these bills, if you haven't already, at the "Share Your Opinion" page at the Nevada Legislative web-site. A link to that sight is listed below. We are in FAVOR of SB 384 and provided our amendments remain intact, we would be in FAVOR of SB 502 as amended April 14.

RPEN's public employee coalition continues to meet weekly, where our issues of common interest and concern are discussed.

The week will involve many floor sessions in both houses though, as lawmakers seek to pass bills ahead of the April 25th deadline.

As previously mentioned, if you haven't yet "shared" your opinion log into the Nevada Legislative website at <https://www.leg.state.nv.us/App/Opinions/79th2017/A/> or contact your state representatives through a phone call at (775)-684-6827 in Northern Nevada or (702)-486-2626 in Southern Nevada; email; in-person visit when possible or a personal letter. They already know that numbers count, but it never hurts to remind them! And if you don't know who your representative is, there is a place at the Nevada Legislative web-site for that too! Go to the homepage, <https://www.leg.state.nv.us/> and then click on "Who's My Legislator, What's My District" along the right side of the homepage. In that same vicinity there is another spot to click on that takes you to all Contact Information for **ALL** Senators and Assembly Representatives.

The session may be over half over but the real nitty gritty begins next month when crunch time sinks in, so stay tuned for that.

Terri Laird, Executive Director