

RPEN LEGISLATIVE ALERT XI  
FRIDAY, April 21, 2017

One of two major bills that RPEN is closely watching was voted on today in the Senate. SB 384 passed on a party line vote, with Senator Cannizzaro voting “No”. RPEN’s privacy bill being carried by Sparks Senator Julia Ratti, seeks to clarify what is and is not private, confidential information as it relates to retired public employees. The issue came to light with a lawsuit several years ago from Reno Newspapers, Inc., doing business as the Reno Gazette Journal. That case went all the way to the Nevada Supreme Court who sided with RGJ. The Nevada Policy Research Institute (NPRI) filed a second lawsuit last year against the Nevada Public Employees’ Retirement System (PERS) and its Executive Officer Tina Leiss. That case is also headed to the Supreme Court after a District Court Judge sided with NPRI. SB 384 received unanimous support when it was considered by the Senate Government Affairs Committee as amended. As amended it considers the following information public; Identifying Number (replaces Name), Last Public Employer, Retirement Date, Years of Service Credit, Amount of Benefit and Type (Service or Disability). The PERS Board voted April 20 to support the bill and it is now headed to the Assembly.

Another Senate Bill we are concerned with is SB 502. As introduced, the bill sought to move the Public Employees’ Benefits Program (PEBP) and NV Deferred Comp to the Department of Administration and change both Boards from governing to advisory, as well as removing one of two retirees on the board. RPEN, working with other public employee groups, met several times last week with Patrick Cates, Director of the Dept. of Administration and Chair of the current PEBP Board, and reached consensus on several amendments to the bill as introduced. Those amendments will keep PEBP as a governing board and leave two retirees on the board. It will also remove the Director of Finance (Jim Wells currently serves in that capacity on the board) from the board, and adds a second representative from the Nevada System of Higher Education as well as two Classified employees.

During a special Legislative meeting of the PEBP Board April 20, they reversed an earlier position of being opposed to SB 502 to a 6-1 vote of support for the

amended version. NSHE representative Chris Cochran abstained, but the other six members present voted for the bill as amended, including Jim Wells, who is also the former Executive Officer at PEBP before Damon Haycock took over. SB 502 now goes before the full Senate for consideration and needs to be moved before the April 25 deadline. But it was noted during the PEBP meeting by Chair Cates and Haycock that there was a great deal of solidarity from all parties involved to get to this point and sends a message to the Legislature that everyone involved can live with the decisions made.

The PEBP two-year budget will be considered April 25 in a work session. RPEN remains concerned about a resolution to the non-state retiree/orphan issue and is hopeful the Legislature will look to solve that dilemma this session. The PERS budget should be heard sometime in early May.

Speaking of May, RPEN Day at the Nevada Legislature is Wednesday, May 3. RPEN State Officers and members from around the state will be at the Legislative Building in Carson City. We will host a table in the foyer at the building and will be spreading the word of RPEN. Many of the workers at the Legislature are retired public employees so there will be a great opportunity to reach out to prospective new members. We will be there from 8am-2pm so if you are able to get there, be sure to wear your RPEN T-shirt if you have one, and if you don't you can reach out to your local chapter to get one before May 3.

Until then if you haven't voiced an opinion on our bills at the "Share Your Opinion" page on the legislative website, be sure to do it now at <https://www.leg.state.nv.us/App/Opinions/79th2017/A/>

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