



THE "BOTTOM LINE" LEGISLATIVE REPORT

A Weekly Report From the Chamber on Issues Affecting You in the State Capital

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THE WEEK JUST PAST... On Friday, taps was playing outside the Legislative Office building for Law Enforcement Memorial Day. It might just as well have been playing for many bills that were dying in the final hours of the conference committees.

HB 37, extends health insurance coverage to full-time students on medical leaves of absence - "Michelle's Law" - is on its way to passage.

The conferees agreed on technical changes to the bill that extends coverage to dependants who are full time students and who have to take a medical leave of absence. The coverage does not exceed 12 months

Potential Floor Fights:

HB 678, which decreases in the insurance property & casualty premium tax, also requires all insurance carriers to pay the premium tax in advance. There may be a floor fight from the House Ways & Means Committee. There are concerns about the implications on the revenue estimates if the companies overpay. The state would have to give refunds, which may then complicate the state revenue estimates.

HB 1752, which defines an independent contractor and requires a form to be filled out by all independent contractors before being hired, was quite a committee of conference. There will surely be a floor fight in the House on this one.

One side (the Senate) believes the independent contractor form which has to be signed by the independent contractor and the employer prior to the hiring will allow the employers *prima facie* evidence when there is a workers comp claim by all independent contractors. They believe less claims will come forward and more will be dismissed. The other side thinks this bill will erode the unions by allowing more people to be independent contractors rather than employees. The House conferees did not fight for the House position which was just notification of the criteria of employees and independent contractors. The lone Democrat on the committee who fought for the House position and the unions was removed from the committee. Expect the unions to fight the process on the floor.

New Bills...

Word is that there will be a new bill introduced on Wednesday, if the Senate and House agree by a two-thirds majority to allow it to be introduced. It will contain parts of many other bills from the session. Just how large the Christmas tree will be is something that will emerge as we get closer to Wednesday. Stay tuned.

Please contact Teresa Rosenberger, Devine, Millimet - (603) 226-1000, or the Greater Nashua Chamber of Commerce - (603) 881-8333, if you have any questions.