

2021 Legislative Session-5th Weekly Update Weeks March 1-15, 2021

Hello to all our AFSCME 4041 Retiree members! We hope our members are staying safe and well. These last two weeks have seen the Nevada legislature continue to work through bill hearings and some votes on bills as those pieces of legislation work their way through the Assembly and Senate. As we have stated to you before in our alerts, things are moving somewhat more slowly than in past sessions, as there are difficult challenges to the legislative and bill drafting process with the pandemic still with us. We anticipate a scenario where the building could be opened to your advocates as well as the public in early April but we will keep you posted on that decision. In the meantime-see below for a reminder for all our members to get vaccinated as soon as they can!

Today (March 15th) was supposed to be a deadline for all legislators to get the final bills that they are sponsoring individually introduced (there are some exceptions) under our constitutional calendar: https://www.leg.state.nv.us/Session/81st2021/Docs/120-day_calendar.pdf However, because the Legislative Counsel Bureau (LCB) is overwhelmed with the requests for drafting legislation under the current Covid19 restrictions, that bill introduction deadline has been pushed to March 22. There are currently a total of 1139 BDRs and not all of them will “turn into” bills (see: <https://www.leg.state.nv.us/Division/Research/Publications/LegManual/2019/AppC.pdf>).

So far 578 Bills and resolutions have “dropped” (been introduced) out of this current session’s BDR list. As the session goes on more BDRs can be added as well. For our areas of concerns (Public Employee Benefits Program, NV PERS, Elections rights and voter accessibility, public employee concerns) we are tracking a total of 216 items: 84 Bills and resolutions and 132 BDRs. There have been some hearings where we have attended (virtually) but not testified and others where we have submitted written and/or oral testimony.

Both PEBP and NV PERS also do bill tracking and last Thursday March 11 PEBP had their first “round up” presentation of current bills in the legislature that they believe may have an impact on the program. NV PERS is scheduled to do the same this coming Thursday March 18 at its upcoming Board meeting. We attend these meetings along with bill hearings and coalition labor partners (Nevada AFL-CIO, NARA) meetings to make sure that our Retiree members get a fair shake in our legislature!

Another big factor in this session will be the impact of the Congressional pandemic relief just signed into law on our State budget. This last week gave us the wonderful news that after our long fight in which AFSCME played a crucial part, “The American Rescue Plan” has been signed by President Biden: <https://www.afscme.org/press/releases/2021/saunders-american-rescue-plan-a-historic-victory-for-public-service-workers>

With billions of dollars on its way to help state and local governments, we reject the notion that any cuts to retiree healthcare programs such as our own here in Nevada (PEBP) are needed to balance the budget and we will keep making our voices heard on this subject throughout the legislative session.

Finally: As a reminder-AFSCME is encouraging all our retired brothers and sisters to get the vaccine as soon as it is available in their states: <https://www.afscme.org/covid-19/vaccine>

“Immunize Nevada” has a toll-free number to call that can help you set up your appointment through your particular county. Follow the prompts on the recorded message once you dial in and you will get to talk to an actual human being! **Call:**

1.800.401.0946
between 8:00 AM to 8:00 PM, seven days a week

Feel free to send us your thoughts and any questions to either Priscilla Maloney directly maloneypriscilla@gmail.com or to the office: Afscmeretirees4041@gmail.com