

Legislative Status Report

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STATE SPENDING & TAX PACKAGE

HB-6365 — two-year, \$38.5 billion budget proposal. Awaiting action by the House. (CBIA opposes.)

SB-932 — implements the Democrats' tax package and significantly increasing taxes by, among other things, limiting all business tax credits, repealing critical sales tax exemptions, increasing the corporate tax rate by 30% in the next three years, and increasing the personal income tax. Awaiting action by the Senate. (CBIA opposes.)

STATE TAXES

Fees

SB-808 — was modified so it only increases probate fees by 25%. Awaiting action by the Senate.

Miscellaneous taxes

SB-884 — allows job-creation tax credits to be transferred. Approved by the Commerce Committee. Awaiting action by the Senate. (CBIA supports.)

SB-930 — increases the taxes on alcoholic beverages and tobacco products. Awaiting action by the Senate. (CBIA opposes.)

HB-6560 — allows municipalities to impose a surcharge on services that the state sets fees on. Awaiting action by the Planning and Development Committee. (CBIA opposes.)

Property Tax

SB-379 — allows municipalities to tax certain vacant land properties at a different rate than developed properties. Approved by the Planning and Development Committee; awaiting action by the Finance Committee. (CBIA opposes.)

SB-388 — authorizes cities and towns to delay or defer property revaluations. Approved by the Planning and Development Committee; awaiting action by the Finance Committee. (CBIA opposes.)

SB-997 — allows towns to delay until 2011 their next scheduled revaluation for the 2008, 2009 or 2010 assessment year; also permits the suspen-

sion of phase-in assessment increases for up to two years. Awaiting action by the House. (CBIA opposes.)

Sales Tax

SB-806 — modifies certain retail agreements to require some Internet retailers to collect Connecticut sales and use tax. Awaiting action by the Senate.

SB-998 — requires the DRS to conduct a review of any recommended possible steps regarding the streamlined sales tax project. Awaiting action by the House. (CBIA neutral.)

Tax appeals

HB-6041 — makes several changes to assessment laws, including requiring training of assessment board members; increasing the rights of certain landowners by raising from \$500,000 to \$1 million the assessed value of property that the board must elect to hold an appeal hearing; and eliminating the gross multiplier income method as a valuation option. Awaiting action by the House. (CBIA supports.)

Tax credits

SB-884 — allows for the transfer of job creation tax credits so that businesses can still benefit from creating new jobs in the state. Approved by the Commerce Committee. Awaiting action by the Senate. (CBIA supports.)

BUSINESS LAW & LIABILITY

SB-838 — increases the penalties for identity theft; subjects certain entities to dual regulation in Connecticut. Approved by the Appropriations Committee. (CBIA supports in part.)

SB-894 — requires defendants in automobile accidents to disclose their insurance policies prior to a lawsuit being filed against them. Awaiting action by the House. (CBIA opposes.)

SB-963 — adopts provisions of the model business corporation which makes Connecticut a better place to incorporate. Approved by the Judiciary Committee; awaiting action by the Senate. (CBIA supports.)

SB-1026 — postpones the beginning of the statute of limitations until a police investigation is completed. Awaiting action by the Public Safety Committee. (CBIA opposes.)

SB-1090 — clarifies how entities that collect

Social Security numbers must post their privacy policies. Awaiting action by the Appropriations Committee. (CBIA neutral.)

CORPORATE GOVERNANCE

HB-6298 — increases from \$2,000 to \$3,000 the remuneration threshold that determines when someone has to register as a lobbyist. Awaiting action by the Senate. (CBIA supports.)

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

SB-1 — adds to government bureaucracy by allowing the state to establish and administer retirement plans for small businesses without eliminating the cost barrier facing small businesses that want to offer retirement plans. Approved by the Appropriations Committee; awaiting action by the Senate. (CBIA opposes.)

EDUCATION AND JOB TRAINING

SB-1068 — allows federal stimulus dollars to be used for green jobs training programs and the creation of green jobs in Connecticut. Approved by the Energy and Technology Committee. Awaiting action by the Senate. (CBIA supports.)

HB-6488 — requires local and regional school boards to change the graduation criteria for high school to 25 credits, focusing on math and science and including world languages, a senior project and student support; to be implemented in 2016, with funding to ensure it beginning in 2012. Awaiting action by the Appropriations Committee. (CBIA supports.)

ENERGY & TECHNOLOGY

SB-1101 — calls for the DPUC to determine if a discount rate for low-income gas and electric customers is possible. Approved by the Energy and Technology Committee; awaiting action by the Senate. (CBIA neutral.)

SB-1103 — classifies new power generated at hydropower plants through upgrades as a Class I renewable source. Approved by the Energy & Technology Committee; awaiting action by the Senate. (CBIA supports.)

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SB-1129 — improves existing energy efficiency program and encourages more generation of Class I renewable sources in the Connecticut. Awaiting action by the Senate. (CBIA supports.)

SB-1130 — improves existing energy efficiency program and encourages more generation of Class I renewable sources in Connecticut. Approved by the Energy & Technology Committee; awaiting action by the Senate. (CBIA supports.)

HB-6510 — creates a Connecticut Power Authority which usurps private companies' power by allowing a state-run entity to procure and generate power. Awaiting action by the House. (CBIA opposes.)

HB-6635 — allocates money collected from ratepayers for the Clean Energy Fund to be diverted to a new residential solar program. Approved by the Energy and Technology Committee; awaiting action by the House. (CBIA neutral.)

HB-6636 — eliminates the option of electric supplier choice for businesses and residents with a load of 100 kw or less if they do not currently have a competitive supplier. Awaiting action by the Senate (CBIA Opposes).

ENVIRONMENT AND LAND USE

SB-871 — expands the DEP's enforcement authority regarding "knowing violations." Awaiting action by the Senate. (CBIA opposes in part.)

SB-1019 — establishes mandatory deadlines for fuels sold in Connecticut to contain certain levels of biodiesel. Awaiting action by the Senate. (CBIA opposes.)

SB-1106 — promotes substantial changes to several environmental programs that would increase costs and regulatory burdens for businesses. Died in the Finance Committee. (CBIA opposes.)

HB-5930 — requires state agencies, when proposing new regulations, to include in the fiscal note an analysis of the fiscal impact on small businesses. The measure also expands the definition of "small business" for purposes of the regulatory flexibility requirements in the regulatory adoption process; and allows the Regulations Review Committee to reject a regulation if these requirements are not met by the agency proposing the regulation. Approved by House and Senate; awaiting the governor's signature. (CBIA supports.)

HB-6097 — expands opportunities for the redevelopment of mills and brownfields located in floodplains. Also clarifies the liability of municipalities when they take control of brownfield

sites, and improves the ability of current property owners to recover remediation costs from others who contributed to the contamination. Awaiting action by the House. (CBIA seeking additional liability reform in the bill.)

HB-6464 — prohibits various types of funding for certain activities, including brownfield remediation and economic development projects, unless the projects are deemed to be consistent with smart growth principles. Awaiting action by the House. (CBIA opposes.)

HB-6465 — requires the Transportation Strategy Board (TSB) to incorporate smart growth into its future plans. Current TSB criteria already include a variety of considerations typically considered "smart growth" strategies. Awaiting action by the House. (CBIA opposes.)

HB-6467 — substitute language establishes a definition for "smart growth" and "smart growth principles," and requires various local, regional and state plans to incorporate smart growth principles. Awaiting action by the House. (CBIA evaluating.)

HB-6585 — encourages municipal cost savings through regional coordination. However, section 1 of the bill includes a provision that could result in effectively mandating municipalities to join the expensive state health care pool if establishing a municipal pool is not a practical option. Awaiting action by the House. (CBIA supports in part.)

HEALTH CARE

SB-47 — weakens the ability of private entities to enter into certain contracts by mandating the terms that must be included, and those that can't be included in agreements made between doctors and insurance companies. Awaiting action by the Senate. (CBIA opposes.)

SB-678 — establishes a cost-containment authority to review ways to reduce the increasing costs of health care. Awaiting action by the Senate. (CBIA supports.)

SB-782 — helps to reduce costs and improve the quality of health care by developing Connecticut's electronic medical records system. Awaiting action by the House. (CBIA supports.)

HB-5018 — creates a mechanism in which all existing and proposed health benefit mandates will be reviewed and analyzed to determine their costs and benefits. Awaiting action by the Senate. (CBIA supports.)

HB-5172 — provides a clearinghouse of health insurance information to employers and individuals in order to help them learn what policies may be available to them. Awaiting action by the House. (CBIA supports.)

HB-6582 — opens the expensive state employee health plan to small companies and other groups, enables the plan to operate outside of Connecticut's protective health insurance laws, and forces taxpayers to shoulder the cost burden under a self-insured system. Awaiting action by the House. (CBIA opposes.)

HB-6600 — creates a massive, government-run health care conglomerate and charges many employers a fee to pay for the new system. Also includes some positive health care reforms (promoting care coordination, improved technology, incentives for better health status, preventive care, and data compilation and transparency). Awaiting action by the Human Services Committee. (CBIA supports in part, opposes in part.)

HB-6675 — uses federal stimulus dollars in a way that improves the health care system and increases access to health insurance. Awaiting action by the House. (CBIA supports.)

Health benefit mandates

The following mandates would increase costs and reduce flexibility for businesses, particularly small businesses, by requiring that health insurance policies cover various things.

SB-290, SB-301, SB-638, HB-5433 — awaiting action by the Senate. (CBIA opposes.)

HB-5021, HB-5093, HB-5672, HB-5673, HB-6240 — awaiting action by the House. (CBIA opposes.)

SB-299, HB-6540 — awaiting action by the Appropriations Committee. (CBIA opposes.)

HB-5023 — awaiting the governor's signature. (CBIA opposes.)

LABOR AND EMPLOYMENT

SB-365 — strictly limits employer-employee communications at required meetings about a variety of topics considered "political," by the legislature, including government operations, politics, or the decision to join any political, social or community group or activity. Awaiting action by the Senate. (CBIA opposes.)

SB-715 — requires employers to provide a written reason for employees' termination and to retain those records for one year or be subject to penalties. Undermines the employment-at-will doctrine which allows employers and employees to sever their relationship at any time and for any reason. Awaiting action by the Senate. (CBIA opposes.)

SB-716 — prevents insurance companies from deducting from long-term disability (LTD) insurance policy benefits the amount a person receives in Social Security disability income for

the disability. Increases insurance costs for insurance companies as well as employers and individuals who purchase LTD policies. Awaiting action by the Insurance Committee. (CBIA opposes.)

SB-1099 — allows appeals in workers' compensation cases to be taken prematurely to the state appellate court before a final judgment or decision has been reached by the lower court. Awaiting action by the House. (CBIA opposes.)

HB-5177 — requires employers to provide notice of the availability of earned income tax credits even though notice is already available to employees from the IRS, tax preparation service companies and others. Awaiting action by the Senate. (CBIA opposes.)

HB-5249 — unreasonably penalizes employers when handling workers' compensation claims by placing strict timelines on the time for seeking independent medical exams and treatments. Holds employers liable for delays in medical treatment and financially penalizes employers for seeking second opinions in workers' compensation cases. Awaiting action in the House. (CBIA opposes.)

HB-5521 — prohibits employers from using credit checks, histories or references as a condition of employment unless substantially related to the job, and imposes penalties on employers to be paid directly to employees. Awaiting action by the House. (CBIA opposes.)

HB-6187 — imposes a one-size-fits-all mandate on employers by requiring them to provide employees with a minimum of 6.5 paid sick days per year regardless of their current personnel practices, financial resources or business demands. Awaiting action by the House. (CBIA opposes.)

HB-6189 — promotes more litigation and higher costs for employers by requiring them to include information on gender in annual employee wage reports given to the state Department of Labor in order to determine if gender discrimination occurs. Awaiting action by the House. (CBIA opposes.)

HB-6461 — allows certain wastewater treatment facility operators to become certified without completing the requisite training hours if they had time off work due to a compensable injury. Awaiting action by the House. (CBIA opposes.)

HB-6534 — undermines the traditional secret ballot process for union elections by allowing unions to form in a workplace by simply collecting signatures on cards from a majority of employees; makes unionization far easier and labor benefits more costly. Applies to public-sector employers, but is likely to be expanded to private-sector employers in the future. Awaiting action by the House. (CBIA opposes.)

HB-6683 — requires employers to pay for injured employees' legal fees in workers compensation cases involving third parties. Awaiting action by the House. (CBIA opposes.)

REGULATORY IMPACT

HB-5930 — requires state agencies, when proposing new regulations, to include in the fiscal note an analysis of the fiscal impact on small businesses. The measure also expands the definition of *small business* for purposes of the regulatory flexibility requirements in the regulatory adoption process; allows the Regulations Review Committee to reject a regulation if these requirements are not met by the agency proposing the regulation. Approved by House and Senate; awaiting the governor's signature. (CBIA supports.)

STATE CONTRACTS

HB-5046 — defines a micro business as one whose gross revenues do not exceed \$3 million; gives them preference for state contracting bids. Awaiting action by Government Administration and Elections Committee. (CBIA is neutral.)

TRANSPORTATION

SB-154 — reconstitutes the Bradley International Airport board of directors and gives the board broader authority with regard to contracting and employing managers. Awaiting action by the Senate. (CBIA supports.)

SB-445 — requires the DOT to conduct an analysis of establishing electronic tolls at state borders. Awaiting action by the Senate. (CBIA neutral.)

HB-6465 — requires the Transportation Strategy Board (TSB) to incorporate smart growth into its future plans. Current TSB criteria already include a variety of considerations typically considered "smart growth" strategies. Awaiting action by the House. (CBIA opposes.)

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