

LEGISLATIVE UPDATE - MAR. 8, 2024

SENATE DEMOCRATS PRIORITY BILL RECEIVES PUBLIC HEARING: On Tuesday, the Housing Committee held a public hearing on [SB 6 - An Act Concerning Housing](#). The Senate Democrats priority bill: (1) seeks \$20M in appropriations to fund shelters thus reducing the incidence of homelessness; (2) looks to apply just cause eviction standards universally (currently applies to seniors/disabled only); (3) increases Housing Choice Programs (Section 8) to access all housing markets - value of assistance vouchers would be adjusted by zip code; (4) appropriates \$25M into the General Fund for rental assistance programs administered by the Department of Housing; (5) increases the state conveyance tax by 1% where the sale of a building is by an institution; (6) establishes a 10% tax credit for the conversion of commercial property to residential housing in certain demographics; and (7) cuts the sales tax to 3% on the purchase of goods used to build affordable housing.

COMMITTEE PUBLIC HEARINGS THIS WEEK: Other notable public hearings:

- **INSURANCE AND REAL ESTATE** - Testimony was heard on bills that would: (1) require health insurance coverage for the diagnosis/treatment of infertility; and (2) require the Connecticut Health Insurance Exchange to hold public meetings/receive legislative approval prior to entering into nondisclosure or settlement agreements, charging assessments or user fees, or changing the amount of/or process used to calculate said assessments and fees.
- **LABOR AND PUBLIC EMPLOYEES** - Testimony before the committee included: (1) a bill requiring a study of paid sick days; and (2) a bill requiring employers/insurers acting on behalf of employers to inform employees of a proposed discontinuance/reduction of coverage concerning prescription medication (with prior approval from an administrative law judge).
- **HUMAN SERVICES** - Heard testimony on bills that would: (1) authorize Medicaid funding for beds reserved by chronic disease hospitals for patients temporarily transferred to acute care hospitals for critical care; (2) make technical revisions to human services statutes; and (3) expand Husky Health benefits to all uninsured residents under nineteen years old.
- **CHILDREN** - Testimony was heard on a bill that would require the Commissioner of Children and Families to conduct a study to determine whether policy/procedural changes within the department would increase children's safety.
- **PUBLIC HEALTH** - The committee heard testimony on a bill promoting hospital financial stability that would, among other things, develop an emergency diversion program for hospitals, funding for the rare disease advisory council, and incorporates Certificate of Need changes. Other bills heard before the committee would: (1) create an interagency council on homelessness strengthening programs involving, among others, health and human services and housing to help prevent homelessness; and (2) require hospitals to adjust financial assistance programs and perform additional reporting.

- **ENERGY AND TECHNOLOGY** - Testimony was heard on bills that would: (1) require the Department of Energy and Environmental Protection ("DEEP") to study expanding the state's natural gas capacity and redefines "Class 1 Renewal Energy Source" to include hydro powered/nuclear powered electricity; (2) require the Public Utilities Regulatory Authority to evaluate the impact of large data centers on grid reliability; and (3) require members and staff of the Connecticut Siting Council to have expertise concerning electric transmission infrastructure.
- **ENVIRONMENT** - The committee is holding a public hearing this morning. Among the bills being heard is one that would prohibit the use of PFAS in certain products. The committee will also hear testimony on the House Democrats Climate Change bill, [HB 5004](#), which, among other things, declares a climate crisis in the state, establishes a state agency greenhouse gas emission reduction schedule, requires DEEP to publish information on the costs/sources of electricity in the state and establishes a CT Clean Economy Council.

GOVERNOR LAMONT NOMINATIONS JURISTS FOR SUPERIOR COURT: Last Friday, Governor Lamont announced 22 nominees to serve as Superior court judges. There are currently 35 vacancies. The full nominee list can be found in the Governor's press release [here](#).

COMMITTEES CONTINUE JF/JFS PROCESS: A number of committees held meetings this week to JF or JFS bills, a process in which a committee issues a joint favorable ("JF") report on a bill. Any bill reported out with amended or new language is referred to as a Joint Favorable Substitute ("JFS"). The bill may then move to another committee for consideration or directly to the appropriate House/Senate chamber to await further action.