

RISE Delaware™: Legislative Update for June 18, 2024

HOUSE BILLS 375, 376, 377 (cost reduction)

The RISE Board (Elisa Diller, Karen Peterson, Mary Graham and Robert Hall) attended yesterday's Senate Executive Committee meeting in Dover. Sen. Karen Peterson (ret.) spoke in support of the package of three bills on behalf of the Board. Taylor Hawk from DSEA also spoke in support of the bills. Those bills have now been reported out of committee and are on the "Ready List" for consideration in the full Senate.

It was gratifying to hear the comments of Executive Committee members Sen. Bryan Townsend (who was co-vice chair with Rep. Paul Baumbach of the RHBAS committee) and Sen. Brian Pettyjohn (member of the RHBAS) who both recognized the importance of the engagement of the public in the work of the RHBAS, including by RISE and its supporters. In that regard, Sen. Townsend looked over and noted the presence in chambers of "some of the fiercest advocates this side of fierceness" while Sen. Pettyjohn noted how the public had been "engaged at every single meeting" of the RHBAS and how passionate everyone had been.

We also got to talk with Debbie Gottschalk, who is the legislative attorney who drafted all of Rep. Baumbach's RHBAS-related legislation. She has obviously had quite a drafting job as the existing code was not the most coherent and cohesive set of laws to deal with. All her unsung work deserves our appreciation!!

HOUSE BILL 330 (budget set aside for funding of State Retiree healthcare benefit)

Some of you have asked about the status of House Bill 330 and whether there is a need for comments when it is addressed by the House Appropriations Committee on June 20. We do not see any need to comment on this bill. We are confident that Rep. Baumbach knows what he is doing in shepherding these bills through. Our sense is that, given all the political work by Rep. Baumbach (with help from Senator Townsend) over the last several months and all the incredible engagement of RISE supporters in reaching out to legislators, we are at the stage of the political process where less from us is more and we should just sit back. If we learn that we can be helpful, we will let you know.

Some of you have also asked if there is time for HB 330 to become law this session. Yes, that is still possible and we are hopeful that it will. As we are hopeful that HB 281 and 282, which are ready for action by the Governor, will become law.

Regards,
Mary Graham
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RISE Delaware: Retirees Investing in Social Equity Delaware
Elisa Diller, President

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