



# Capitol Monitor

A Report on Activity at the State Capitol

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## Pension Agreement Narrowly Passes:

Despite receiving bi-partisan approval and being voted out of the Appropriations Committee in late January, Republicans in the state legislature decided to play politics with the Pension Agreement between the Malloy administration and SEBAC unions. Various financial ratings agencies and the Pew Charitable Trust supported the agreement's method. Even the Connecticut Business and Industry Association testified in committee in support of the agreement, which will stabilize funding to the State Employee Retirement System. But when the measure was brought to the chamber floor for final approval, Republican leaders announced they could not support the plan unless it came with significant "pension reform," which is to say "state worker concessions." With plan's approval now up in the air, Sen. Beth Bye elected to leave her spouse's hospital bedside, fly to Hartford and cast her vote in favor of the measure. That meant a 17-17 split in the Senate along party lines. Cue Lt. Gov. Nancy Wyman to cast the first tie-breaker of the session. The agreement passed the House 76-72 with Rep. Gary Byron the only Republican to vote in favor and Rep. Pat Boyd the only Democrat to vote against the agreement.

## More Hits to Higher Ed in Governor's Budget:

Facing a budget hole of \$3.6 billion, Gov. Malloy released his budget that puts pressure on working families, state employees and cuts to programs and services, including higher education. Under Governor Malloy's budget, the CSCU system faces a 4.4 percent cut, representing a \$25 million decrease to the total allocation, including fringe benefits. To see the full budget report, [click here](#).

While the budget assumes \$1.5 billion in employee concessions or 4,200 layoffs, it eliminates the \$200 property tax credit against state income tax, raises the exemption of the Estate Tax from \$2 million to \$5 million and lowers the lifetime limit that could be paid under the Estate and Gift Tax from \$20 million to \$5 million. What was that about "shared sacrifice" and a "new economic reality?" Looking at increasing revenue streams, the governor's budget raises taxes on cigarettes and increases pistol permit costs from \$70 to \$300. Should you wish to read Governor Malloy's budget address, [click here](#).

## Speak out for Higher Ed at Approps Hearing:

With continued cuts to public higher education, it is imperative for members to speak out. Join us Feb. 15 to testify at the Appropriations Higher Education Subcommittee public hearing to support funding for public higher education. The public hearing begins at 7:30 p.m. and can last until late into the evening, depending on how many people are testifying. To sign up to testify in person, email [Liz Newberg](#) by Feb. 14 at 3 p.m. and **wear your red CSU-AAUP shirt to the hearing**. You may also submit written testimony directly to the committee. Testimony must include: your name; date; the name of your organization; and any bill numbers on which you may be commenting. All testimony must be filed online by 10 a.m. the day of the hearing. Email all Appropriations Committee testimony to [apptestimony@cga.ct.gov](mailto:apptestimony@cga.ct.gov).

## 2017 Legislative Session Important Dates:

- **Feb. 15:** Appropriations Higher Education Subcommittee Hearings
  - \* 2 p.m. CSCU Budget Presentation
  - \* 5 p.m. to 7:30 p.m. Higher Education Panels—administration, faculty and students testify to the subcommittee
  - \* 7:30 p.m. Public Hearing
- **Feb. 15:** Committee Bill and Raised Bill Deadlines
- **March 31:** Connecticut Coalition for Public Higher Education Lobby Day Part 2 from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m.
- **April 27:** Joint Favorable Deadline