



# Capitol Monitor

A Report on Activity at the State Capitol

Vol. 8, Issue 2 | March 19, 2018

## Commission Attacks Bargaining Rights:

In a [report](#) that took no one by surprise, the Commission on Fiscal Stability and Economic Growth – a committee composed mostly of millionaire CEOs and big business representatives – called for an end to collective bargaining on pension and health care after the SEBAC 2027 agreement expires. Any benefits for state employees after 2027 would be determined by the state legislature.

As commission members shamelessly look out for their own with a proposed elimination of gift and estate taxes, their recommendations are nothing more than Corporate Greed incarnate.

And how do they propose to make up for all that lost revenue? On the backs of the working and middle class, of course. Not content with

stripping away workers' rights, the commission would be cuffing working and middle classes with increased regressive taxes, including the gas and sales tax. To top it off, they also expect another \$1 billion in budget cuts.

If you'd like to speak out against this report, you may do so this Wednesday, March 21, 2018, at a joint public hearing of the Appropriations Committee, Commerce Committee, Finance, Revenue and Bonding Committee, and Planning and Development Committee starting at **1 p.m.** in the **House Chamber**.

The committees will hear testimony on the "[Report of the Commission on Fiscal Stability and Economic Growth.](#)"

Please email written testimony in Word or PDF to [FINtestimony@cga.ct.gov](mailto:FINtestimony@cga.ct.gov). The first hour of the hearing is reserved for the Co-Chairmen of the Commission on Fiscal Stability and Economic Growth. Speakers will be limited to three minutes of testimony. Witnesses are encouraged to submit a written statement and to condense oral testimony to a summary of that statement.

If you would like to testify in person, please email CSU-AAUP Communication Associate Liz Newberg at [newberge@ccsu.edu](mailto:newberge@ccsu.edu) by **4 p.m. on Tuesday, March 20, 2018**, and she will be sure your name is on the list of those testifying.



## Higher Ed Committee Passes Free Tuition, Dreamers Bills:

On the heels of a nor'easter that dumped more than 12 inches of snow in some parts of the state, the Higher Education Committee heard testimony on HB 5371, known as Free2Start Free2Finish Scholarship Program. The bill would offer low and middle income students two years of free tuition at a Connecticut community college or free tuition for the last two years at a Connecticut state university, including UConn.

CSU-AAUP President Elena Tapia issued a [statement on the bill](#) and public higher education leaders and students [submitted testimony](#) before the storm hit and threatened the hearing's cancellation. You can read the full selection of testimony [here](#).

In their March 15 meeting, [the committee voted 11-9 to pass this HB5371](#). And in a vote of 17-3, the committee also passed [HB5031](#) that gives undocumented students access to institutional financial aid. These two bills now move to the House and Senate Floor where they will wait to be called for a vote.

CSU-AAUP stands in support of Connecticut Dreamers. If you wish to show your support, [click here to sign their #AffordToDream petition](#).

## Labor Hears Family Leave And Captive Audience Bills:

Recent Labor Committee public hearings gave a voice to some positive bills for families and worker rights, including [SB 1](#) and [HB5387](#), which look at earned/paid family and medical leave. The United States is the only industrialized nation that does not offer mandatory family leave. [In terms of maternity leave, America is dead last.](#)

Another bill would prevent employers from intimidating workers who are looking to unionize. [HB 5473 An Act Concerning Captive Audience Meetings](#) would prevent employers from holding mandatory meetings with employees on matters of religious or political nature not pertaining to their job. Many such captive audience meetings are held by employers with the aim to mislead and coerce employees into not forming a union. Speakers at the hearing testified that this practice is alive and well in Connecticut. Employees from Foxwoods and Severance Foods in Hartford recanted incidents at their own workplace where scare tactics were used by management to prevent them from unionizing.

## Save The Date:

CSU-AAUP is joining forces at the Capitol again with the 4Cs and UConn-AAUP on **Wednesday, April 11, 2018, for the Second Annual Public Higher Education Lobby Day**. The legislature will be in session on that day and we expect a lot of lawmakers to be in the building. Please mark your calendars and bring your students along as well.

Public Higher Education Lobby Day will be held in the second floor atrium of the [Legislative Office Building](#) from 8:30 a.m. to noon. We will hear opening remarks from union leaders and lawmakers before heading out to meet with legislators and their aides. A light breakfast will be served. Stay tuned for more details in the coming days.

**To R.S.V.P., please email CSU-AAUP Communications Associate [Liz Newberg](#) at [newberge@ccsu.edu](mailto:newberge@ccsu.edu).**