



Thursday, May 5, 2011

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Biennium Budget Passes Senate and House; Governor Signs Into Law

At 3 a.m. Tuesday morning, the Senate voted 19 to 17 to pass the state's Fiscal Year 2012-2013 spending and tax plan. Early Wednesday morning, the House of Representatives voted to adopt the budget bill, [SB 1239](#), *An Act Concerning The Budget For The Biennium Ending June 30, 2013*, on a vote of 83-67, with 15 Democrats joining the Republican minority in voting against the bill. The bill was immediately transmitted to Governor Malloy, who, as promised, signed the two-year spending and tax plan into law yesterday, saying about the budget: "It's tough, it's honest, it's fair."

During 11 hours of debate in the Senate, Republican Senators questioned Democratic leaders on their budget proposal and offered a series of amendments, including their "no tax increase budget" as an alternative to SB 1239. Senator L. Scott Franz (R-Greenwich) introduced an amendment to eliminate the hospital tax from the budget and tax package. After a lengthy debate, the amendment failed 14-22 on a party-line vote. No Republican amendments were adopted and the budget was transmitted to the House for further action.

In the House, Representative Jason Perillo (R-Shelton) led the Republicans' opposition to the hospital provider tax during the budget debate. Rep. Perillo opposed the tax as detrimental to every hospital, praised hospitals as major economic engines in their communities, and noted how a provider tax and cuts to funding would harm patients' access to care.

The last piece of the budget equation still unresolved at this point is the \$1 billion per year in state employee union concessions being sought by the Malloy administration. Without the concessions, the General Assembly and the administration will need to negotiate additional spending cuts and/or additional tax increases.

In the next few weeks, legislative leaders and members of the Malloy administration will work together to draft the budget implementer bills, which are legislative proposals that provide the administration with specific language on how to implement the various aspects of the budget. It is expected that the details of the hospital provider tax will be included in these budget implementer bills, once a final version of the tax is agreed on.

For more information about efforts to oppose the tax and cuts to hospitals, click [here](#).

Other Hospital-Related Bills Continue To Work Through Legislature

In addition to adopting a two-year budget this week, various legislative committees of the General Assembly met throughout the week to take action on bills referred to them for consideration. The House of Representatives also met on Thursday and was scheduled to act on several bills of interest to Connecticut hospitals.

On Tuesday, May 3, the Public Health Committee met and voted to release with a Joint Favorable (JF) report, [HB 6614](#), *An Act Concerning Medical Foundations* and [HB 6553](#), *An Act Concerning Documentation Of Licensing For Workers Hired To Replace Striking Or Locked-Out Health Care Employees*. The Judiciary Committee released with a JF, [SB 970](#), *An Act Concerning Workplace Violence Prevention And Response In Health Care Settings*, a bill CHA has supported in concept, but has [expressed concern](#) with some of the language. CHA is currently working with other interested parties in amending the language of the bill.

On Wednesday, May 4, the Appropriations Committee met and released [SB 1202](#), *An Act Concerning The State's Health Care Workforce*, a bill [supported](#) by CHA and [SB 1204](#), *An Act Establishing The Connecticut Health Insurance Exchange*. CHA

expressed [support](#) of the sections of SB 1204 that establish an exchange, but opposed the section of the bill creating a basic health plan.

The House of Representatives is expected to meet, maybe as early as next week, to vote on a number of bills, including [HB 5460](#), *An Act Concerning Captive Audience Meetings*. HB 5460 is a union-backed piece of legislation that would limit employers' communications with their employees. CHA strongly [opposes](#) this bill.

A full summary of action taken on bills of interest to Connecticut's hospital community will be reported in next week's edition of *Update*.

Save the Date: June 23 for the CHA Annual Meeting



CHA's Annual Meeting, encompassing the theme of *"Reform. Resilience. Resolve: Connecticut Hospitals Shaping the Future of Healthcare,"* will be held from 4-7 p.m. on Thursday, June 23, at the Aqua Turf Club in Southington. The program will begin with a one-hour business meeting and presentation of annual awards, followed by a networking session, and then a keynote speech by Donna Brazile, political strategist and media commentator.

For more information about CHA's Annual Meeting, contact Christine Prestiano, Coordinator, Education and Sponsorship Services, at Prestiano@chime.org.

National Hospital Week Begins Sunday



Connecticut hospitals will join in celebrating 90 years of National Hospital Week, which began in 1921 and has become one of the largest events celebrating healthcare in the country. The week, May 8-14, is an opportunity for hospitals to celebrate the history, technology, and advances in hospital care, and, most important, the dedicated healthcare professionals who work to provide quality, safe care.

Click [here](#) to read more about the AHA's resource materials to celebrate the week.

CDC Report Calls for States To Do More To Fight Childhood Obesity

According to a [report](#) recently released by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, states can do more to improve policies to promote healthy eating and fight childhood obesity. Schools, child care facilities, and communities also have a role to play.

The 2011 Children's Food Environment State Indicator Report found that 32 states, including Connecticut, and the District of Columbia scored at or below the national average for the proportion of food retailers that typically sell healthy foods within a state. "To feed their children healthy food at home, parents must have ready access to stores that sell affordable, healthy food," said William Dietz, MD, director of CDC's Division of Nutrition, Physical Activity and Obesity. According to the report, as of December 2008, only one state (Georgia) had enacted all of the following state licensure regulations for childcare facilities: restricting sugar drinks; requiring access to drinking water throughout the day; and limiting TV and computer time at child care facilities.

This CDC report is consistent with CHA's 2011 [legislative initiative](#) to provide leadership to improve the health of our communities.

For information about childhood obesity, visit <http://www.cdc.gov/obesity/childhood>.

Education Updates

The Art and Science of Obstetrics Safety, Tuesday, May 17, 8:30 a.m. - 1:30 p.m.

There is widespread agreement that obstetrics is a complex, high-risk area in healthcare. Experts say three in 100,000

deliveries involve serious perinatal injuries that can result in serious disability or death. A comprehensive safety program using precise, standard protocols and evidenced-based guidelines can eliminate many of the adverse outcomes associated with obstetric care.

CHA is pleased to partner with PeriGen, nationally recognized specialists in OB risk reduction, to provide healthcare professionals with an exceptional program addressing an array of innovative and practical patient safety interventions, including a discussion on perinatal high reliability, a case study on eliminating birth trauma, a discussion of critical obstetric issues including inductions under 39 weeks, use of Oxytocin, and the role of laborists and midwives, and a thoughtful look at the issues of patient satisfaction, cultural change, liability losses, staff satisfaction, patient outcomes, and team dynamics in the process of developing a state of the art obstetric quality and safety program.

Several experienced obstetricians and OB/GYN specialists will serve as faculty including: Edmund Funai MD, Professor of Obstetrics, Gynecology, and Reproductive Sciences, and section chief at the Yale University School of Medicine; Christian Pettker MD, Yale Fellow in Maternal-Fetal Medicine and Assistant Professor at Yale University; and William Cusick MD, Chair of Obstetrics and Gynecology, and Director of Maternal-Fetal Medicine at St. Vincent's Medical Center in Bridgeport, CT.

The Connecticut Hospital Association is an Approved Provider of Continuing Nursing Education by the Connecticut Nurses' Association, an Accredited Approver by the American Nurses Credentialing Center's Commission on Accreditation (4.25 contact hours). This activity was approved by the National Association for Healthcare Quality for 4.25 CPHQ CE credits. The John D. Thompson Hospice Institute for Education, Training and Research, Inc. designates this educational activity for a maximum of 4.0 AMA PRA Category 1 Credits™.

Click [here](#) for the brochure. Click [here](#) to register.

Building the Quality Foundation, Tuesday, May 24, 8:30 a.m. - noon

As healthcare reform continues to make clear, everyone must be involved in quality improvement and patient safety. This introductory course is designed to provide all hospital administrative, operational, clinical, and support staff with the fundamental knowledge and practical tools needed to build and sustain a culture of quality and patient safety.

Participants will gain a working knowledge of common quality terms, explore how organization culture either permits or prevents errors, why being on the sharp end of healthcare delivery is difficult when a mistake happens, and how to avoid communication breakdown – cited as the number one sentinel event reported to The Joint Commission. The presentation will review how to build PI teams, develop measures of improvement, and utilize evidence-based practices to investigate errors and learn from defects. Concepts and methods to improve hand off communication will be introduced including briefings, rounding, huddles, and other practical tools.

Alison Hong, MD, CHA's Interim Vice President of Quality and Patient Safety, will be the program's speaker.

This activity is pending approval by the National Association for Healthcare Quality for CPHQ CE credits.

This activity has been planned and implemented in accordance with the Essential Areas and Policies of the Accreditation Council for Continuing Medical Education (ACCME) through the joint sponsorship of The John D. Thompson Hospice Institute for Education, Training and Research, Inc. and The Connecticut Hospital Association. The John D. Thompson Hospice Institute for Education, Training and Research, Inc. is accredited by the Accreditation Council for Continuing Medical Education (ACCME) to provide continuing medical education for physicians. The John D. Thompson Hospice Institute for Education, Training and Research, Inc. is pending designation of this educational activity for AMA PRA Category 1 Credits™. Physicians should only claim credit commensurate with the extent of their participation in the activity.

Click [here](#) for the brochure. Click [here](#) to register.

Sexual Harassment Prevention, Wednesday, May 25, 9:00 a.m. - noon

Connecticut law requires employers with 50 or more employees to provide training and education on the prevention of sexual harassment in the workplace to all supervisory employees within six months of their hire or assignment to a supervisory position. Beyond the legal requirement, employers realize that it makes good business sense to train their supervisory staffs, and sends a clear message that respect for others is a foundational value of leaders in creating a high-performance work environment.

This program provides a practical, application-oriented, and cost-effective way for newly appointed supervisors and managers to fulfill the mandatory state training requirement. Participants will learn the types of behavior that constitute sexual harassment, how to conduct an appropriate investigation into complaints of misconduct—a process that protects the rights of all parties involved, and how to take appropriate action to prevent serious problems in the organization including poor morale, absenteeism, turnover, and costly lawsuits. The format is highly interactive and uses group discussion, a video, examples, and

case studies to teach participants how to recognize and take action to prevent sexual harassment.

Click [here](#) for the brochure; [here](#) to register.

NOTE: CHA is also pleased to support the Connecticut Multicultural Health Partnership by hosting its symposium on language access services on Monday, May 16, 2011 from 8:30 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. at CHA.