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VGEA Today:

**Legislative Day Monday,
February 18!**

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**Crossover on Capitol
Square**

Tracking Legislation

General Assembly Crossover Update

February 7, 2013



What's Happening on Capitol Square? *Budget Highlights as We Pass Crossover*

Crossover is the halfway point of the General Assembly Session and marks the time when the bills approved by one chamber - the House of Delegates or the Senate - literally *cross over* or are exchanged from one to be reviewed by the other. Last Tuesday was crossover for the 2013 session, which means that all the bills that originated in the Senate (starting with SB) will now need to be voted on by the House, and vice versa.

The budget amendments have also been released and here are some of the highlights of particular interest to VGEA members:

Employee Compensation -
Both Committees provide similar funding amounts to **increase the previously approved 2% pay raise for**



VGEA Executive Director Ron Jordan was interviewed by Channel 6 and other media this week about the state employee outlook regarding House and Senate budget amendments to address 2014 salary increases. Visit www.vgea.org.

**Don't Miss
Legislative
Day!**

**NEXT MONDAY
2/18/13**

On Monday, February 18, at 9 a.m. we'll meet by the large clock in front of the General Assembly Building on Capitol Square. (If you see General Washington's statue, pictured below, he's riding away from that building). It's a holiday, so parking will be free and plentiful around the city of Richmond!



Following a morning of lobbying your legislators with VGEA Board Members and visiting the Capitol, enjoy complimentary lunch sandwiches served from noon to 2 p.m. at the VGEA Offices in the afternoon.

Please RSVP ASAP by e-mail:
info@vgea.org or
 call toll-free 877-302-7146.

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state employee and state-supported employees. Details about how they want to accomplish this differ:

The House decided they wanted to focus on **salary compression** with their amendment - which is when *newly hired* employees make **more** than those with many years of service. To address this issue, they adopted amendment, House [Item 468 #3h](#). (This amendment was changed from the one we previously addressed, which would have provided a one-time performance-based bonus.) It now instead provides a **salary increase of \$50 per year after five years of service for all long-term employees**. For instance, a state worker with 20 years service would receive a \$750 raise - 15 years multiplied by \$50 per year. The amendment caps the increase at 30 years of service.

The Senate's amendment remains [Item 468 #3s](#), which as passed by the Senate would provide funding for an **additional 1 percent across the board salary increase for state workers so it would increase the current 2 percent salary increase currently budgeted for July 2013 to 3 percent for all active state employees**. There is an additional salary compression feature for State Police that would reward long-term officers with \$50 per year of service after six years.

The ideal outcome for state workers would be for both branches to pass both pending amendments, or even to sweeten them. **Please continue to keep in touch with your legislators! Thank them for their support of state employees so far this session and encourage them to continue by passing these pending budget amendments.**

Teacher Pay Raises - Both Committees approved the Governor's proposal to fund the state share of a 2% raise for teachers and would extend that raise to include school support staff.

Higher Education - Both committees provide additional funds for Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) education and to expand enrollment at selected institutions as part of a long-term effort to provide 100,000 degrees over the next 10 years.

Tuition Assistance Grants (TAG) - The House increases this program, which provides assistance to Virginia residents attending Virginia private colleges, from \$2,800 to \$3,100 per year, while the Senate did not address this issue.

Medicaid Expansion - Both committees tied Medicaid expansion under the Affordable Care Act (Obamacare) to program reform and limited the expansion to those at 133 percent of the federal poverty level rather than the 138 percent allowed by the federal government. Before any expansion could go forward, the federal government would have to agree to certain changes in the Virginia Medicaid program that would have the effect of only covering items similar to those covered by private health insurance. Once agreement with the federal government was reached, then the General Assembly would be required to approve it, thereby likely pushing any approval off until the 2014 General Assembly session.

Rainy Day Fund - The House increases the prepayment of 2015 Rainy Day Fund from \$50 to \$95 million. The Senate takes a different approach by reserving \$36 million in a Financial Flexibility Reserve Fund.

Transportation - Both Committees approve the Governor's proposed transfer of \$49 million in increased sales tax revenues from the general fund to the Transportation Trust Fund.

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Virginia Governmental Employees Association



**Your Voice
 at the Capitol!**

Share this newsletter with
 your fellow employees and
 remind them that the VGEA
 is the **only** organization
 working to protect state
 employee salaries, benefits
 and retirement.

**The work of the VGEA
 is supported only by
 member dues.**

[Click here to join.](#)

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 (\$2 for retirees) it's an
 investment in yourself and
 your future.

While we do our best to explain these legislative happenings, we realize they can be confusing. If you have questions or concerns, please email VGEA at info@vgea.org and we'll strive to find the answers or point you in the right direction!

Join Your VGEA Board for Legislative Day: Next Monday, February 18!

Contact your legislators today to thank them and ask them to continue to support state employees! *Better yet, plan to meet them in person February 18 at VGEA's Legislative Day! Call Sonya at 877-302-7146 or e-mail her at swilliams@vgea.org for details and to RSVP.*

Legislation Worth Watching

Which Bills Interest YOU?

For more information about each piece of legislation, please click the bill title below. The link will take you to the [Virginia General Assembly Legislative Information System website](http://leg1.state.va.us/lis.htm) (<http://leg1.state.va.us/lis.htm>) which will provide you with all the details. If any link malfunctions, just go to the LIS site listed above and enter the bill number to go to that page. Any bills that you've been following that are not included on this list did not pass the House or Senate and so have not moved on to the opposite branch for review.

[SB701 State government employment; nondiscrimination.](#)

[SB704 Workers' compensation; disease presumption, corrections officers.](#)

[SB727 Workers' compensation; presumptions, members of enforcement division of DMV.](#)

[SB816 Payment of wages to employees; requires employers to maintain and preserve certain records.](#)

[SB921 Health insurance reform; revises State's laws.](#)

[SB922 Health insurance; plan management and rate review.](#)

[HB1336 Tax credit for employees who telework.](#)

[HB1393 Fleet management; DGS to issue guidance documents to govern use of vehicles in state fleet.](#)

[HB1769 Health insurance; plan management and rate review.](#)

[SB811 State or local employees; filing fraudulent liens or encumbrances against, penalty.](#)

[HB1422 Interchangeable biosimilar biological products; permits pharmacists to dispense.](#)

[HB1532 Virginia Retirement System; benefits for certain local employees.](#)

[HB1489 State employees; State Comptroller to process payroll on weekly basis.](#)

[SB838 State employees; option of converting accumulated sick leave into service credit under VRS.](#)

[HB1590 VRS; certain higher educational institution employees in optional retirement plan.](#)

[SB995 VRS; technical changes regarding retirement plans.](#)

[SB1104 State officers and employees; removal of certain officers from office.](#)

[SB1178 Fraud and Abuse Whistle Blower Reward Fund; amount of reward.](#)

[HB2138 Health Insurance Reform Commission; established, report.](#)

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