

*The*

SMITH HILL REPORT



PUBLISHED BY THE RHODE ISLAND FEDERATION OF TEACHERS & HEALTH PROFESSIONALS/AFT, AFL-CIO

Chafee Budget Submitted

In presenting his State of the State address to the General Assembly on January 15, 2014, Governor Chafee summarized his proposed State Budget. The ideas were then incorporated into legislation submitted by House Finance Committee Chair Helio Melo. That bill, [H7133](#) contains budget numbers for state spending plus proposed legislative changes in the form of Articles to the State Budget. A summary of Budget Articles important to RIFTHP members will be in next week's Smith Hill Report.

An overview of the Chafee budget plan can be viewed [here](#).

In his budget plan, Governor Chafee proposes to:

- Fully fund the fourth year of the education funding formula which requires an additional \$38 million to be distributed to public school districts (\$28.5 million) and charter schools (\$8 million) and other education programs. ([See chart](#))
- The increased charter school allocation is for expansion of existing schools and the opening of three new charter schools.
- Provide an additional \$12.6 million to public higher education institutions, \$10 million of which is dedicated to preventing a tuition increase.
- Ask voters to approve a \$125 million bond to build a new Engineering School at URI.
- Provides \$1.8 million to Central Falls Schools in the stabilization fund.
- Preserve \$250,000 funding for districts planning to adopt full-day kindergarten.

The Chafee budget plan does not:

- Increase funding for agencies that provide services to the developmentally disabled, failing to restore money cut two years ago.
- Dedicate state funds for state worker pay increases.
- Increase aid to municipalities.
- Increase broad-based taxes.

Corporate-backed School Voucher Bill Introduced

For the second year in a row, school voucher legislation modeled on legislation written by the corporate-funded organization American Legislative Exchange Council was introduced in the Rhode Island General Assembly this year. The bill sponsors, Rep. Eileen Codere and Rep. Arthur Corvese, introduced [H7118](#) on January 16.

January 21, 2014

In This Issue

→ Chafee Budget Submitted

→ Corporate-backed School Voucher Bill Introduced

→ Bill Introductions

[Sign up here to receive the Smith Hill Report!](#)

[Senate Contacts](#)

[House Contacts](#)

[Senate/House Committee Assignments](#)

The American Legislative Exchange Council, known as ALEC, is a secretive business-funded organization dedicated to limiting worker rights and promoting the interests of their corporate funders. The organization is run by legislators and corporate sponsors who have full access to the committees. Behind closed doors, the education committee crafted model voucher legislation that is the basis of the Coderre/Corvese bill. More information on ALEC can be seen on the ALECExposed website run by the Center for Media and Democracy.



[H7118](#) would divert public money from public school districts to private and religious schools in the form of a voucher. The size of the voucher would depend of the household income of the private or religious school student. The bill is referred to the House Finance Committee.

This Week on LaborVision features a presentation from Prof. Scott Malloy on Rhode Island labor leader Seth Luther, RIFTHP Pres. Frank Flynn discusses education issues at the General Assembly, and a recap of the Rhode Island AFL-CIO Convention.

Bill Introductions

If you would like to read the full text of a bill, just click on the bill number.

Teacher Layoff and Termination Notice - June 1

([H7026](#) *Ruggerio, House Labor*)

The RIFTHP opposes this act which would amend the notification requirements regarding the dismissal, suspension or lay-off of teachers in the event of a fiscal exigency or program reorganization.

Common Core Implementation Commission

([H7095](#) *Amore, House Health, Education and Welfare*)

The RIFTHP supports this act which would delay the implementation of the standardized testing based on common core curriculum until a commission, created by this law, has had an opportunity to study and evaluate it, and further, has submitted its findings and recommendations to the governor and the general assembly as to the adequacy and efficiency of such standardized testing.

Teacher Evaluation Schedule

([H7096](#) *O'Brien, House Health, Education and Welfare*)

The RIFTHP supports this act which would provide that teachers who obtain a rating of "highly effective" or the equivalent thereof would be evaluated not more than once every four (4) years, and that teachers who obtain a rating of "effective" or the equivalent thereof would be evaluated not more than once every three (3) years. This act would not prohibit annual evaluations for teachers during their first three (3) years in a district..

School Vouchers

([H7118](#) *Coderre, House Finance*)

The RIFTHP opposes this act which would create the Parental Choice Scholarship Program Act to enable students from lower income families to qualify for scholarships to enroll in and attend a participating school. A participating school may be a public school outside of the district, a magnet school, an alternative school, or certain private schools.

LaborVision is seen on Cox Ch. 14 and FioS Ch. 33

Tuesdays @ 7PM

Thursday @ 8PM

Saturday @ 5PM

[Connect with us on](#)



[Click here to unsubscribe](#)

© **American Federation of Teachers, AFL-CIO.** © **2011**

This e-mail and any attachments are confidential and are intended solely for the named addressee(s). If you are not a named addressee, you should not copy, alter, post, forward, distribute or disseminate the contents of the e-mail or attachments. Any views or opinions expressed are solely those of the individual and do not necessarily represent those of American Federation of Teachers (AFT).