

LEGISLATIVE UPDATE - APRIL 19, 2024

SESSION: The state House of Representatives and state Senate convened on both Wednesday and Thursday of this week.

In the House, Wednesday's session was largely focused on passing a number of executive and legislative nominations. The House also unanimously passed HB 5413 - An Act Concerning the Illegal Use of Certain Vehicles and Street Takeovers - which strengthens laws and penalties related to illegal street racing, street takeovers and all-terrain vehicles. The House also passed HB 5419 - An Act Concerning the Authority of the Attorney General to Initiate Legal Actions in Response to Alleged Discriminatory Housing Practices and HB 5169 - An Act Concerning the Requirement to Install Swimming Pool Barriers - which prohibits a powered safety cover in lieu of a compliant barrier. On Thursday the House passed, among other bills, HB 5168 - An Act Concerning Solar Installations in Condominiums, HB 5098 - An Act Adopting the Nurse Licensure Compact and HB 5382 - An Act Concerning the Recommendations of the Office of the Child Advocate.

On Wednesday, the Senate unanimously passed SB 307 - An Act Concerning Medicaid Coverage of Biomarker Testing, SB 181 - An Act Concerning Emergency Department Crowding - which requires reporting on emergency departments in hospitals, and SB 384 - An Act Concerning the Low-Income Energy Advisory Board - which adds water to the scope and adds additional members to Board.

On Thursday, and after a lengthy debate, the Senate passed SB 222 - An Act Concerning Changes to the Paid Family and Medical Leave Statutes and also passed SB - 395 An Act Concerning the Reporting of Medical Debt.

Both Chambers adjourned early Thursday evening to allow members to attend an annual gala hosted by the legislature's Black and Puerto Rican Caucus.

SENATE DEMOCRATS' PRIORITY BILLS REFERRED TO JUDICIARY: Two of the most heavily lobbied bills of the session were amended and referred to the Judiciary Committee.

- Senate Bill 2 - An Act Concerning Artificial Intelligence - A bill that would establish a new regulatory paradigm for Artificial Intelligence in Connecticut was amended by [Senate Amendment Schedule "A" \(LCO 3940\)](#) and was subsequently referred to the Judiciary Committee. The Judiciary Committee referral is triggered by the violation provisions contained in the bill. Senator Maroney, the chief architect of the bill, indicated the bill continues to be a work in progress and will return to the Senate after the referrals for the body to consider.
- Senate Bill 3 - An Act Concerning Consumer Protection - A bill that would, among other things, create a low income broadband program, require total price disclosures ("Junk Fee") provisions, prohibit certain drones, create a state regulated Neutrality compliance provision and prorate streaming services was also amended by [Senate Amendment Schedule "A" \(LCO 4021\)](#) and referred to the Judiciary Committee for consideration.

The Judiciary Committee is scheduled to meet Monday morning.

COMMITTEE REFERRALS: Various committees met this week to consider bills referred from the House and Senate including the Transportation Committee, which decided not to act on HB 5470 - An Act Concerning Transportation Network Companies and Third-Party Delivery Companies - that would have established minimum compensation for network workers in the state and outline rideshare/delivery driver standards concerning reimbursement for mileage, tolls, vehicle wear and tear and trip cancellations and HB 5297 - An Act Concerning the Decriminalization of Possession of Small Amounts of Psilocybin - effectively killing both bills for the year.

UCONN DAY AT THE CAPITOL/SIBERIAN HUSKY TO BE NAMED OFFICIAL STATE DOG: The UConn Men's Basketball team was celebrated at the State Capitol on Wednesday. Coach Hurley and members from the team visited with both legislative chambers to celebrate their recent NCAA Championship victory. In further commemoration, the House passed [HB 5304](#) which would officially designate the Siberian Husky as Connecticut's state dog and also designates the lollipop as the state's official candy. The bill will head to the Senate for further action.

HUSKY 4 IMMIGRANTS: Representative Gilchrest held a press conference on Wednesday along with CT Students for A Dream advocating for HUSKY health benefits for undocumented immigrants under age 18. Beginning July 1, all children ages 15 and under will qualify for HUSKY coverage regardless of their immigration status, so long as their families meet the qualifying income limit. In addition to being allowed to enroll in the program, those same children can also keep the coverage through age 19. Kids who are older than 15 when the expansion begins will not be eligible. Rep. Gilchrest believes an age cut off is arbitrary "the impact of not having health insurance is vitally important, there is often a disconnect between policy and people" she said.

NEXT WEEK: The House of Representatives intends to meet Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday next week. The Senate also plans to meet Tuesday and Wednesday next week.