

2024 LEGISLATIVE PREVIEW

*Overview of the Pending Legislation for the Upcoming
Term of the Legislature.*

*Bills That Remain Active for the Second Session of the 2-
year , 152nd General Assembly, convening Jan 2024.*

Legislative Awareness Working (LAW) Group – November 2023

Budget & Tax

- **HB29-HA1** "\$750 Senior Property Tax Credit"
 - Submitted by Rep. Hensley. Assigned to Appropriations in Apr. '23.
- **HB36** "Reduces real estate transfer tax from 4% back down to 3% ."
 - Submitted by Rep. Bush (superseding **HB71**, previously submitted by Rep. Ramone).
 - Assigned to Appropriations in Jan. '23.
- **HB89** "Increase Standard Deduction for DE Taxes"
 - Includes increase in "refundable" earned income tax credit to 7.5%.
 - Passed House 39-0, released from Senate committee. On Ready List.
- **HB128** "Revision to State Tax Brackets"
 - Establishing new brackets between \$60K-100K and above \$100K. Reported out of committee. On House Ready List since May '23.
- **HB149** "Indexing Tax Brackets for DE Taxes"
 - Prevent tax rate increases due to cost-of-living increases.
 - Introduced 5/11/23 by Rep. Collins.
- **HB233** "Revise/Collapse Tax Brackets"
 - Introduced by Rep. Ramone.
- **HB234** "\$1000 Senior Property Tax Credit"
 - Introduced by Rep. Ramone.

Voting

- **HB43** "Allow Independent Voters to Vote in Primary"
 - 170K Independent voters. Would not allow crossover voting. **No Action.**
- **HB77** "Constitutional Amendment Requiring General Assembly Members to Remain Domiciled in the Districts They Represent"
 - 2nd Leg passed 4/6/23. Involved in triggering RD37 Special Election.
- **HB96-HA1** "Reduce Voting Age for School Board Elections to 16"
 - Adds Driver's Learners Permit and school transcript to acceptable ID documents. **Tabled in committee.**
- **HB215** "Move Primary Election Date to April"
 - Move to April vs. September.
 - Passed House, **defeated in the Senate (3 No – 18 NV)**
- **SB3** "Constitutional Amendment to Eliminate Limitations on Absentee Ballots"
 - Allows for no-excuse absentee voting. Passed Senate (15-5-1), sent to House and released from committee. **On House Ready List.**
- **SB79** "Term Limits for Legislators, AG, Insurance Commissioner, Auditor & State Treasurer." **No Action.**
- **SB180** "Constitutional Amendment to Restore Voting Rights to Felons Upon Completion of Imprisonment" – 1st Leg
 - Released from Senate Judiciary committee. **On Senate Ready List.**

2nd Am'dm't & Justice

- **SS1 for SB2** "Permit to Purchase Handguns"
 - Recurrent training (500 vouchers for low-income), fingerprinting & SBI background check. Valid for only one year. Passed Senate (15-6), assigned Appropriations committee in the House.
- **HB155** "Safe Vehicular Storage of Firearms"
 - Requires unattended storage in a locked container, locked glove compartment or locked trunk.
 - Passed Senate (15-6), moves to House (previously approved 24-13) to address Senate Amendment 1 (which removed the exemption for CCDW holders).
- **HS1 for HB167** "Funding for School Resource Officers"
 - Up to \$21 Million for 219 public schools in Delaware.
 - Assigned to Appropriations Committee, requiring Budget authorization.
- **HS1 for HB224** "Narrow Delaware Definition of Firearm"
 - Aligns with federal criminal background check law. Passed unanimously in House, sent to Senate Judiciary committee.
- **Previous Legislation Passed in 2022 has Ongoing Court Challenges**
 - HB450 (Semi-auto/"Assault Weapons" ban), HB451 (Minimum age 21) and SS1 for SB6 (limiting capacity to 17 rounds/so called "High Capacity" magazines).

Pro-Life & Family

- **SB59/SB58** “Government Control of Childcare Reimbursement Rates”
 - Establishes statewide wage for childcare rate for providers in Kent & Sussex that mirrors New Castle County rates. Eliminates childcare co-pay for 200% of the poverty level (as was done during COVID-19 emergency).
 - Both assigned to Finance committee
- **HS1 for HB110** “Taxpayer-Funded Abortion”
 - Provides for insurance and Medicaid coverage for abortions – without deductible or co-pay.
 - Assigned to the House Appropriations committee.
- **HB140** “Assisted Suicide”
 - Assumes correct medical diagnosis and does not require the signing physician to even know the patient! Mailing suicide drugs to residence for self-administration.
 - Reported out of committee (1 “unfavorable” vote) and placed on House Ready List.
- **HB150** “Universal Child Health Coverage”
 - Extend Medicaid coverage to children who are not otherwise covered, including those who are not documented.
 - Assigned House Appropriations committee
- **HB230** “Medical Experimentation, Sterilization and Mutilation of Children”
 - Allows Delaware to take emergency jurisdiction of a child that isn’t able to obtain (for whatever reason) “gender affirming care.”
 - Shields medical professionals from consequences of experimentation on children who want “gender transition.”
 - Makes Delaware a sanctuary state for medical experimentation on children.
 - Assigned to Health & Human Development committee.

Equal Rights

- **SB44** “Creation of the Office of New Americans”
 - Creates a bureaucratic “office” to promote “attraction, retention and inclusion of immigrants and refugees.” Increase immigrant access to English language instruction, connect them to legal services to assist with naturalization and reduce exploitation and fraud against immigrants.
 - Voted out of Elections & Government Affairs and sent to Senate Finance.
- **Various Legislation was anticipated in the following areas, but did not appear:**
 - Re-definition of Sexual Orientation, Gender Identity and Disability across Delaware Code.
 - Extending existing language in the DE Constitution protecting immutable rights (sex, race, color and national origin) to include “sexual orientation, gender identity and disability” (fluid characteristics).
 - Requiring student athletes to compete on teams/sports associated with their biological sex.

Environmental Issues

- **“Zero-Emission Vehicle” Regulations**
 - Require a complete phase-out of combustion engine cars and light trucks, 2026-2035, as called for by an interstate compact tying Delaware to California’s regulatory model.
 - See identical regulations appearing in NJ and Federal regulations emerging from the EPA on a similar path (67% EV by 2032).
- **HB123** “Requires DNREC to Obtain Consent Before Promulgating Regulations Restricting Sale of Internal Combustion Powered Vehicles”
 - Passed 21-20 in a hard-fought legislative battle. It moves to Senate Committee.
- **SS1 for SB7** “Delaware Energy Planning Act”
 - Expands duties of the State Energy Office to develop/renew the State Energy Plan and support the Climate Action Plan.
 - Signed, after passing Senate (13-6) and House (25-0, without Republicans present)
- **HB9-HA1** “All State-Owned Passenger & Light-Duty Vehicles to be Zero-Emission by 2040”
 - Exemptions for law enforcement, Dept. of Education, school districts, charter schools and “take home” vehicles.
 - Assigned to House Appropriations committee.
- **HB220** “Constitutional Amendment Protecting Natural Resources”
 - “Inherent and inalienable right to a clean and healthy environment.”
 - State Branches, Agencies & political subdivisions designated as “trustees of the State’s natural resources.
 - On House Ready List.

Education & Admin

- **HB192** “Action of Single Digit Proficiency”
 - 25 schools across the state have Language Arts or Math scores below 10% proficiency. This requires action in coordination with the Dept. of Education for short-term plan to address.
 - Passed House 39-0, on Senate Ready List.
- **HB203** “Financial Literacy in High School”
 - Requires a ½ credit course beginning for students who enter 9th grade in 2025-26.
 - Department of Education to submit report by 5/1/26.
 - On House Ready List.
- **SB29** “Retiree Healthcare Benefits Advisory Subcommittee”
 - Addressing unfunded liability and prior proposal to shift all state retirees from current “Medigap” plan to a state “Medicare Advantage” plan.
 - Law was passed and signed. Subcommittee reported recommendations on May 1st deadline.
 - Extended current Medicfill Medicare Supplement contract through June 30, 2024.
 - Committee will continue to meet and report by October 1, 2023.

In Closing

- Note that this is the 2nd half of the 152nd General Assembly and all bills not acted upon in 2023 remain active.
- **Stay Informed and Stay Involved! Public involvement has an impact.**