

THIRD DISTRICT'S MONTHLY UPDATE FROM TRENTON *SEN. SWEENEY, ASM. BURZICHELLI, ASM. TALIAFERRO*

June 2017

Sweeney Bill to Aid Locked-Out Workers With Health Care Assistance Clears Committee



Legislation sponsored by Senate President Steve Sweeney that would aid locked-out workers in continuing their health coverage was approved by the Senate Labor Committee on June 1, 2017. The bill, S3275, would assist in the continuation of health insurance for workers who lose coverage because of a work stoppage due to a labor dispute that has prevented the employee from working.

The legislation would establish a non-lapsing, revolving fund called the "Working Family Health Security Fund" for the purpose of providing assistance for individuals to pay for continuation of health coverage under the Consolidated Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act, known as COBRA.

"Health insurance coverage is critical for working people and their families and they should not be forced to go unprotected because they are locked out of their jobs," said Senator Sweeney. "It's a matter of fairness."

Burzichelli Challenges the Acting Commissioner of Education on School Funding

The Assembly Budget Committee met on April 24, 2017, and heard testimony from Acting Commissioner of Education Kimberley Harrington.

With the observation gallery full of parents, educators and concerned residents, Assemblyman Burzichelli, who is the committee Vice-Chair, pressed the Acting Commissioner on the funding proposals in the Governor's proposed budget.

[View the video here.](#)

Sweeney Legislation to Track Medical Response to Emergencies Advances

Legislation sponsored by Senate President Sweeney to establish a system to track and analyze EMS response to medical emergencies, including to residents suffering from an opioid overdose, was approved by the Senate Health, Human Services and Senior Citizens Committee on June 1, 2017.

"EMS response is a critical part of our health care system. Collecting and analyzing data is vital to evaluating how these systems are working and to making any improvements necessary both in the short term and into the future," said Senator Sweeney.

The bill (S5) establishes certain requirements for emergency medical services providers and dispatch centers to report to the state and outlines the procedures and framework for that reporting.

Taliaferro Bill Banning "Flakka" Approved by Committee



Legislation sponsored by Assemblyman Taliaferro to help curb the use of a street drug often associated with violent and self-destructive behavior was advanced by the Assembly Law and Public Safety Committee on June 1, 2017. The bill (A2176) would criminalize the possession, distribution, manufacture and sale of the drug alpha-pyrrolidinopentiophenone, an inexpensive synthetic drug commonly referred to as "flakka" or "flocka."

"Flakka has been linked to a number of psychotic symptoms and violent attacks, threatening the safety of communities across the nation," said Assemblyman Taliaferro. "With this legislation, New Jersey will be proactive about preventing this dangerous drug from taking over in our state."

Under the bill, possessing, distributing, manufacturing or selling one ounce or more of the drug would be a crime of the second degree.