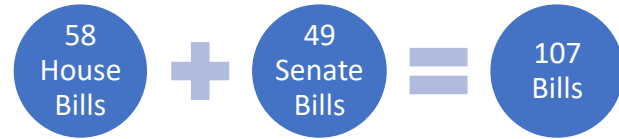


Under the Dome Week 1

Highlights of the Week

On Monday, the first session of the 74th General Assembly was called to order. The 120-day legislative session must adjourn by midnight on Monday, May 8, 2023. Both chambers are held by Democratic majorities – the Senate is split 23-12 and the House 46-19.



Governor Jared Polis's inauguration for his second four-year term was held on Tuesday. The returning Democratic incumbents for statewide office, Secretary of State Jena Griswold, Attorney General Phil Weiser, and State Treasurer Dave Young were all sworn in alongside Governor Polis.

Following the inauguration celebrations, the General Assembly began their work holding SMART Act hearings for Joint Business Affairs and Labor, Joint Health, Joint Agriculture, Livestock & Natural Resources, Joint Education and Joint Energy, Environment and Transportation. The Joint Budget Committee has continued department hearings, which this week included three days of hearings with higher education institutions.

This week 49 bills were introduced in the Senate and 58 in the House for a total of 107 bills. The first ten bills from each chamber – typically key priorities of the majority caucus – tackle affordable housing, education, health care costs, expanding mental health access, wildfire prevention and water protection. Now that the legislative session is underway, more bill ideas and drafts are being released. One proposal to refer a measure to the ballot asking voters to retain the excess state revenue above the TABOR cap to be deposited into the State Education Fund for the purposes of attracting, retaining, and paying public school teachers and support staff is expected to face [significant opposition](#).

Similarly, proposed legislation to create Fair Workweek Employment Standards was circulated in draft form. The bill would put requirements on restaurants and retailers with 250 employees or more surrounding employee work schedule plans, changes to work schedules, notices and posting of employee work schedules and implement a framework on predictability pay, rest shortfall pay, retention pay, and minimum weekly pay. The bill will see opponents from the restaurant, retail and manufacturing industries as well as general businesses that are impacted by portions of the bill. The proponents will be backed with union support and traditional progressive advocates.

The General Assembly will not be in session on Monday, January 16 in observance of the Martin Luther King, Jr. holiday. Governor Polis will deliver his State of the State address on Tuesday, January 17. Next week's hearing schedule includes Joint Budget Committee hearings and the remaining SMART Act hearings, and the first bill hearings in both chambers have been scheduled for the week of January 23.

The Democratic vacancy committee is expected to meet soon to name a replacement for Tracey Bennett, who recently resigned from the House. They have 30 days to fill the seat.

Bills of the Week

[HB23-1001 Expanding Assistance For Educator Programs](#)

- Representative Kipp (D), Representative McLachlan (D), Senator Zenzinger (D)
- Introduced January 9, assigned to House Education
- The bill expands who is eligible for the Temporary Educator Loan Forgiveness Program, Educator Test Stipend Program, and Student Educator Stipend Program administered by the Department of Higher Education. These programs are intended support new and pre-service educators.

[HB23-1006 Employer Notice Of Income Tax Credits](#)

- Representative Young (D), Senator Exum (D)
- Introduced January 9, assigned to Business Affairs & Labor
- Concerning the notice requirements of employers regarding income tax credits, and requiring employers to notify employees of the availability of the federal earned income tax credit, the state earned income tax credit, the federal child tax credit, and the state child tax credit.

[SB23-001 Authority Of Public-private Collaboration Unit For Housing](#)

- Senator Roberts (D), Senator Zenzinger (D), Representative Bird (D), Representative Lukens (D)
- Introduced January 9, assigned to Senate Local Government & Housing Committee
- The bill authorizes the public-private collaboration unit additional functions in connection with public projects that provide housing including acting as an agent on behalf of the department in real estate transactions using real property that upon approval by the governor has been deeded to the department by a state public entity, including for the purchase, transfer, exchange, sale and disposition, and lease of real property.