

## **MACTE Weekly Legislative Report 1.30.15**

**Prepared by Cyndy Crist, MACTE Legislative and Policy Liaison**

### **Information Hearings Continue**

There's not much new yet to report from the Capitol, as committees continue to primarily hold informational hearings on key topics likely to be the subject of legislation during the 2015 session. These include statewide assessments, early learning, World's Best Workforce, and some facilities and technology issues. In the House Education Policy Innovation Committee, I am still awaiting an opportunity to share MACTE's priorities since hearings intended to provide for such reports have run long and a few of us have not yet been called to speak. It is possible that chance will come on Tuesday, February 3.

### **Governor's Budget Released This Week**

Serious discussions about budget bills seldom commence until the governor has released his budget proposals. That happened this week and committees began to hear presentations on the budget and to discuss it. There doesn't appear to be anything in the Governor's budget with a direct impact on teacher preparation and licensure, although increased support for the Reading Corps and for programs and services for ELL students align with recent changes involving teacher preparation. In general, there is plenty of good news for public schools, including a one percent increase per year in the Basic Formula. Parents United offers an excellent summary of the Governor's budget on their website for those interested in further details.

### **Bills to Watch**

Several additional bills were introduced this week with the potential to impact our effort to prepare new teachers and recommend them for licensure, as well as to provide opportunities for graduation and continuing professional development. Of particular interest during the first week of February is a hearing in the Senate E-12 Education Committee on Thursday, February 5 on SF 298 authored by Senator Leroy Stumpf. It would allow candidates who haven't passed the basic skills test to be fully licensed after two years if their college transcript shows that they received credit for math and writing courses and if the school administrator who supervised them attests to their "ability to perform basic job responsibilities requiring reading, writing, and mathematics skills." While this proposed language recognizes the need to address problems with current basic skills testing, we share the concerns of others with the prospect of licensure awarded on the basis of the recommendation of a single person. I encourage you to look the bill up on-line and share your thoughts with me prior to Thursday's hearing.

The complete list of bills that I am tracking at this time, and about which I would welcome your thoughts and input, include the following. Please note that some of these have been listed before; I will simply add new bills each time I share the list.

- House Files 2, 94, 244, 246, 247, 360, 384
- Senate Files 30, 97, 298, 398

Hope to see you all on February 13th.