



# LEGISLATIVE *Update*

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## **Legislators Hit the Ground Running as 2013 General Assembly Session Starts**

SEANC's legislative affairs team and Executive Director Dana Cope were busy in the halls of the General Assembly this week as lawmakers returned to begin the 2013 session. As expected, the General Assembly, in their first incredibly action packed two days of this legislative session, addressed tax reform and unemployment insurance as two of their top priorities.

A rewrite of the state tax structure could propose eliminating the state income tax while expanding sales taxes. The bill is expected to be filed next week so stay tuned for details. The unemployment bill (HB 4), which lowers the maximum available benefit amount, passed the House Finance Committee on Thursday and will be on the House floor Monday night for a vote.

Bills were also filed this week to appoint rather than elect the State Superintendent of Public Instruction, require tobacco-free community colleges, reform oversight of state-owned vehicles, repeal second primaries, add right to work to the state's constitution, increase the retirement age for judges, block Medicaid expansion and limit legislative leadership terms.

In addition, a bill was filed to allow concealed handgun permit holders to bring guns into restaurants where alcohol is served and another to designate school safety marshals who would be allowed to carry guns in emergency situations in public schools.