



# House of Representatives

General Assembly

**File No. 743**

January Session, 2005

Substitute House Bill No. 6738

*House of Representatives, May 10, 2005*

The Committee on Appropriations reported through REP. MERRILL of the 54th Dist., Chairperson of the Committee on the part of the House, that the substitute bill ought to pass.

## **AN ACT CONCERNING PROCEDURES FOR STATE EMPLOYEE COLLECTIVE BARGAINING.**

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Assembly convened:

1 Section 1. Section 5-276a of the general statutes is repealed and the  
2 following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective October 1, 2005*):

3 (a) In the event that either the employer, as defined in subsection (a)  
4 of section 5-270, or a designated employee organization, as defined in  
5 subsection (d) of said section, may desire negotiations with respect to  
6 an original or successor collective bargaining agreement, such party,  
7 not more than [one hundred eighty] three hundred thirty days prior to  
8 the expiration of the existing collective bargaining agreement nor less  
9 than one hundred fifty days prior thereto, shall serve written notice  
10 thereof upon the other party. Negotiations shall commence within  
11 thirty days of such service. Negotiations as to wage reopeners shall  
12 commence within twenty days of receipt by one party of a written  
13 notice with respect thereto, served in accordance with the provisions of

14 any such reopener in the affected contract or, if none is stated therein,  
15 not more than sixty days nor less than thirty days prior to the effective  
16 date of such reopener.

17 (b) Upon the joint request of the parties, following the  
18 commencement of good faith negotiations, the State Board of  
19 Mediation and Arbitration may designate a mediator to assist the  
20 parties in continuing such negotiations and in reaching a settlement of  
21 the issues presented in such negotiations. The mediator designated  
22 shall be experienced in labor mediation and shall be drawn from lists  
23 of such mediators maintained by the board, the American Arbitration  
24 Association or the Federal Mediation and Conciliation Service. The  
25 mediator so designated may only serve if approved by both parties.

26 (c) If, after a reasonable period of negotiation, or, in the case of  
27 negotiations by the parties to an existing collective bargaining  
28 agreement to revise such agreement concerning any matter affecting  
29 wages, hours and other conditions of employment, after [ninety] sixty  
30 days from the commencement of such negotiations, the parties are  
31 unable to reach an agreement, both parties or either of them may  
32 initiate arbitration by filing with the State Board of Mediation and  
33 Arbitration a list of the issues as to which an impasse has been  
34 reached. If such filing is not made jointly, a copy of the filing shall be  
35 served on the other party.

36 (d) Within ten days of a joint filing or within ten days of service on  
37 the other party in the case of a single filing, the parties shall jointly  
38 select an arbitrator. The person selected shall have substantial, current  
39 experience as an impartial arbitrator of labor-management disputes.  
40 Persons who serve partisan interests as advocates or consultants for  
41 labor or management in labor-management relations or who are  
42 associated with or are members of a firm which performs such  
43 advocate or consultant work may not be selected. If the parties fail to  
44 agree on an arbitrator within the ten-day period, the selection shall be  
45 made using the procedures under the voluntary labor arbitration rules  
46 of the American Arbitration Association.

47 (e) (1) The arbitrator selected shall contact the parties to schedule  
48 dates and places for hearings which shall commence not later than  
49 twenty days after the selection of the arbitrator and which shall be,  
50 where feasible, in the principal locality of the state board, department,  
51 commission or agency or unit thereof involved. At least ten days prior  
52 to each such hearing, written notice of the designated time and place of  
53 such hearing shall be sent to the state employer and the state employee  
54 organization. The arbitrator shall preside over such hearings, shall  
55 have the power to take testimony, to administer oaths and to summon,  
56 by subpoena, any person whose testimony may be pertinent to the  
57 proceedings, together with any records or other documents deemed by  
58 the arbitrator to relate to such matters. In the case of contumacy or  
59 refusal to obey a subpoena issued to any person, the Superior Court,  
60 upon application by the arbitrator or either party, shall have  
61 jurisdiction to order such person to appear before the arbitrator to  
62 produce subpoenaed records and to give testimony touching the  
63 matter under investigation or in question, and any failure to obey such  
64 order may be punished by the court as a contempt thereof. The parties  
65 may, at any time during the course of the proceeding, jointly request  
66 the arbitrator to attempt to mediate any or all of the disputed issues.

67 (2) The hearings may, at the discretion of the parties or the  
68 arbitrator, be continued and shall be concluded within thirty days after  
69 their commencement, unless such period is extended by the joint  
70 request of the parties or by the arbitrator for good cause shown.

71 (3) Prior to the commencement of the hearings, each party shall  
72 submit to the arbitrator three copies of a list of all resolved and  
73 unresolved issues, including the party's proposal on each disputed  
74 issue. During the hearing no new issues can be considered unless such  
75 addition is mutually agreed to by the parties. Upon receipt of both  
76 such lists, the arbitrator shall simultaneously distribute a copy of each  
77 to the opposing party. Upon the hearing, each party shall present such  
78 testimony and other evidence as it deems appropriate and as the  
79 arbitrator finds relevant to the issues presented. Evidence as to each  
80 disputed issue shall be presented first by the party presenting the

81 demand underlying such issue. At any time prior to the issuance of the  
82 award by the arbitrator, the parties may jointly file with the arbitrator  
83 stipulations setting forth such disputed issues the parties have agreed  
84 are to be withdrawn from arbitration. Within fourteen days after the  
85 conclusion of the taking of testimony, the parties may file with the  
86 arbitrator three copies of their briefs including their last best offer on  
87 each unresolved issue and, where possible, estimates of the costs of  
88 resolution of each disputed issue. Immediately upon receipt of both  
89 briefs or upon the expiration of the time for filing such briefs,  
90 whichever is sooner, the arbitrator shall distribute a copy of each such  
91 brief to the opposing party. Within seven days after receipt of the  
92 opposing briefs on the disputed issues or within seven days after the  
93 expiration of the time for filing such briefs, whichever is sooner, the  
94 parties may file with the arbitrator three copies of a reply brief,  
95 responding to the briefs on the unresolved issues. Immediately upon  
96 receipt of both reply briefs or upon the expiration of the time for filing  
97 such briefs, whichever is sooner, the arbitrator shall distribute a copy  
98 of each such brief to the opposing party.

99 (4) Within twenty days after the last day for filing reply briefs, the  
100 arbitrator shall file with the secretary of the State Board of Mediation  
101 and Arbitration the award on each unresolved issue as well as the  
102 issues resolved by the parties during the arbitration proceedings. The  
103 arbitrator shall immediately and simultaneously distribute a copy  
104 thereof to each party. In making such award, the arbitrator shall select  
105 the more reasonable last best offer proposal on each of the disputed  
106 issues based on the factors in subdivision (5) of this subsection. The  
107 arbitrator (A) shall give a decision as to each disputed issue  
108 considered, (B) shall state with particularity the basis for such decision  
109 as to each disputed issue and the manner in which the factors  
110 enumerated in subdivision (5) of this subsection were considered in  
111 arriving at such decision, (C) shall confine the award to the issues  
112 submitted and shall not make observations or declarations of opinion  
113 which are not directly essential in reaching a determination, and (D)  
114 shall not affect the rights accorded to either party by law or by any  
115 collective bargaining agreement nor in any manner, either by drawing

116 inferences or otherwise, modify, add to, subtract from or alter such  
117 provisions of law or agreement. If the day for filing any document  
118 under this subsection falls on a day which is not a business day of the  
119 State Board of Mediation and Arbitration, then the time for filing shall  
120 be extended to the next business day of the board.

121 (5) The factors to be considered by the arbitrator in arriving at a  
122 decision are: The history of negotiations between the parties including  
123 those leading to the instant proceeding; the existing conditions of  
124 employment of similar groups of employees; the wages, fringe benefits  
125 and working conditions prevailing in the labor market; the overall  
126 compensation paid to the employees involved in the arbitration  
127 proceedings, including direct wages compensation, overtime and  
128 premium pay, vacations, holidays and other leave, insurance,  
129 pensions, medical and hospitalization benefits, food and apparel  
130 furnished and all other benefits received by such employees; the ability  
131 of the employer to pay; changes in the cost of living; and the interests  
132 and welfare of the employees.

133 (6) The award of the arbitrator shall be final and binding upon the  
134 employer and the designated employee organization unless rejected by  
135 the legislature as provided in section 5-278, except that a motion to  
136 vacate or modify the arbitrator's decision concerning any issue in such  
137 award may be filed in the superior court for the judicial district of  
138 Hartford within thirty days following receipt of such award. Such  
139 motion to vacate or modify shall identify the specific issue or issues in  
140 the award which the court is being asked to vacate or modify. Any  
141 decision by the arbitrator on issues that are not subject to a motion to  
142 vacate or modify shall be final and binding upon the parties. The court,  
143 after hearing, may vacate or modify the arbitrator's decision  
144 concerning any issue in the award if the court finds that substantial  
145 rights of a party have been prejudiced because such award is: (A) In  
146 violation of constitutional provisions; (B) in excess of the statutory  
147 authority of the arbitrator; (C) made upon unlawful procedure; (D)  
148 affected by other error of law; (E) clearly erroneous in view of the  
149 reliable, probative and substantial evidence of the whole record; or (F)

150 arbitrary or capricious or characterized by abuse of discretion or  
151 clearly unwarranted exercise of discretion.

152 (7) The secretary of the State Board of Mediation and Arbitration  
153 shall serve as staff to the arbitrator for purposes of all proceedings  
154 undertaken pursuant to this subsection.

155 (f) The arbitrator's fees and itemized expenses, the rental, if any, of  
156 the facilities used for the hearing and the cost of the transcript, if any,  
157 of the proceedings shall be divided equally between the employer and  
158 the designated employee organization.

159 (g) Any or all of the timing requirements established in this section  
160 that are imposed upon the parties may be waived by agreement of the  
161 parties or by [request] a ruling of the arbitrator. Any or all of the  
162 timing requirements established in this section that are imposed upon  
163 the arbitrator may be waived by agreement of the parties.

This act shall take effect as follows and shall amend the following sections:		
Section 1	October 1, 2005	5-276a

**APP**      *Joint Favorable Subst.*

The following fiscal impact statement and bill analysis are prepared for the benefit of members of the General Assembly, solely for the purpose of information, summarization, and explanation, and do not represent the intent of the General Assembly or either House thereof for any purpose:

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**OFA Fiscal Note**

**State Impact:**

<b>Agency Affected</b>	<b>Fund-Effect</b>	<b>FY 06 \$</b>	<b>FY 07 \$</b>
Various State Agencies	All Appropriated Funds - Cost	Indeterminate	Indeterminate

**Municipal Impact:** None

**Explanation**

This bill makes several changes to state collective bargaining procedures. The bill extends the timeframe during which a collective bargaining representative or the state may begin negotiating a new contract from 180 to 330 days before the expiration of the existing contract, and reduces the time during which a party may initiate arbitration from 90 to 60 days after negotiations begin. The fiscal impact to the state as a result of this bill is indeterminate.

Extending the timeframe in which parties can negotiate a new contract to 330 days may increase costs to the state. In some circumstances, a state employee can be a collective bargaining representative involved in contract negotiations and may be paid for time spent in negotiations. Overtime costs may be incurred by some state agencies to cover the employee's work schedule. By extending the negotiations timeframe, these costs may increase. Even if no overtime costs are incurred, there would still be a loss of productivity to the state for the time spent by the employee in negotiations.

**OLR Bill Analysis**

sHB 6738

***AN ACT CONCERNING PROCEDURES FOR STATE EMPLOYEE COLLECTIVE BARGAINING*****SUMMARY:**

This bill makes several changes to state employee collective bargaining time frames and procedures. It increases the time during which parties may begin negotiating a new contract from 180 to 330 days before the expiration of the existing contract. It reduces the time during which a party may initiate arbitration from 90 to 60 days after negotiations begin. It allows an arbitrator to extend a hearing for more than 30 days for good cause only, rather than for any reason, and eliminates an arbitrator's authority to waive other deadlines imposed on him.

The bill requires motions in Superior Court to vacate or modify an arbitrator's award to identify the specific issue or issues. It also makes final and binding an arbitrator's decision on issues not subject to the motion (see BACKGROUND).

EFFECTIVE DATE: October 1, 2005

**ARBITRATOR TIME LIMITS**

Under current law, any or all of the time frames in negotiation and impasse resolution procedures can be waived (1) by agreement of the parties or (2) at an arbitrator's request. The bill bars an arbitrator from waiving deadlines imposed on him and permits such waivers only by agreement of the parties. It allows deadlines imposed on the parties to be waived by an arbitrator's ruling rather than an arbitrator's request, and by agreement of the parties.

**BACKGROUND*****Motions to Vacate or Modify***

Current law allows the court, after a hearing, to vacate or modify an award if the court finds that the award:

1. violates the Constitution;
2. exceeds the arbitrator's statutory authority;
3. is made using unlawful procedure;
4. is affected by other error of law;
5. is clearly erroneous in view of the reliable, probative, and substantial evidence of the whole record; or
6. is arbitrary or capricious or characterized by abuse of discretion or clearly unwarranted exercise of discretion.

***Legislative History***

The House referred the bill (File 278) to the Appropriations Committee on April 22. On May 2, Appropriations reported a substitute that removed provisions (1) changing the reasons for which the court may vacate or modify an arbitrator's decision and (2) allowing issues not subject to collective bargaining to proceed to arbitration.

**COMMITTEE ACTION**

Government Administration and Elections Committee

Joint Favorable Report  
Yea 9      Nay 7

Labor and Public Employees Committee

Joint Favorable Report  
Yea 8      Nay 3

Appropriations Committee

Joint Favorable Substitute  
Yea 33      Nay 11