OLR Bill Analysis
SB 1134

AN ACT RESTRUCTURING THE STATE BOND COMMISSION AND ESTABLISHING A DEDICATED BONDSING SECTION WITHIN THE LEGISLATIVE OFFICE OF FISCAL ANALYSIS.

SUMMARY

This bill reconfigures the State Bond Commission by placing it in the Legislative Department and removing its executive branch members and constitutional officers and replacing them with the six legislative leaders. Under the bill, the Senate president pro tempore and the House speaker serve as the commission’s co-chairpersons and must jointly prepare the agenda for each commission meeting.

By January 1, 2020, the bill also requires the:

1. Office of Policy and Management (OPM) to transfer to the Office of Fiscal Analysis (OFA) all staff members in its Budget and Financial Management division who are responsible for evaluating or coordinating projects to be presented for the commission’s consideration and

2. OFA director to establish a separate bonding section within OFA and assign the transferred staff, in addition to any other assigned OFA staff, to that section.

Lastly, the bill requires the Bond Commission to make any changes necessary to its procedures and bylaws to carry out the bill’s provisions.

EFFECTIVE DATE: January 1, 2020, but upon passage for provisions transferring OPM staff to OFA; requiring OFA to establish a bonding section; and requiring changes to bond commission procedures and bylaws.

MEMBERSHIP
Under current law, the Bond Commission is a 10-member executive-legislative committee consisting of the governor, treasurer, comptroller, attorney general, OPM secretary, administrative services commissioner, and the co-chairpersons and ranking members of the Finance, Revenue and Bonding Committee or their designees. The bill instead places the commission in the Legislative Department and replaces the governor, treasurer, comptroller, attorney general, OPM secretary, and administrative services commissioner with the six legislative leaders. As under existing law, the Finance, Revenue and Bonding Committee chairpersons and ranking members retain their membership on the commission.

Under the bill, only the Finance, Revenue and Bonding Committee members may have designees to represent them on the commission with the full powers to act and vote on their behalf. The committee members may only designate another committee member who is not already a commission member.

The bill requires the Senate president pro tempore and House speaker to co-chair the commission and (1) jointly prepare the agenda for each commission meeting and (2) designate a commission member to serve as its secretary (see COMMENT).

**BOND ALLOCATION REQUESTS**

Beginning January 1, 2020, the bill requires the OPM secretary, on the Executive Department’s behalf, and the chief court administrator, on the Judicial Department’s behalf, to submit to the commission requests for projects or bond allocations to be included on a Bond Commission agenda. They must submit the requests in a form and manner the commission prescribes.

**STAFF TRANSFER**

Under the bill, any OPM staff transferred to OFA’s new bonding section must maintain the same compensation level he or she was earning at the time of the transfer. OPM must coordinate with the Joint Committee on Legislative Management to accomplish any fund transfers needed for purposes of transferring staff.
OFA’s new bonding section must help prepare the commission’s agendas, research and evaluate projects to include on the agendas, and perform other bond-related duties as assigned by the commission or OFA director.

BACKGROUND

Bonding Process

The state’s bonding process begins with a capital budget initiated by the executive branch. At the beginning of each odd-numbered year, the governor submits a proposed capital budget and implementing legislation to the General Assembly. Bond bills, including the governor’s capital budget, originate in the Finance, Revenue and Bonding Committee and are subject to the regular legislative process.

Once the General Assembly has authorized bonding for a particular purpose, the State Bond Commission must then allocate bond funds for that express purpose before an agency can spend the money. Once the Bond Commission has allocated bonds for a particular project, the agency charged with implementing the project must request an allotment of the bond funds from the governor (CGS § 3-20(g)(3)). Once the governor approves the allotment, the agency may begin spending the bond funds for the project’s purposes.

COMMENT

Bond Commission Secretary

Although the bill (1) removes the OPM secretary from the commission and (2) requires the Senate president pro tempore and House speaker to designate a commission member to serve as its secretary, existing law, unchanged by the bill, designates the OPM secretary as the commission’s secretary (CGS § 3-20(j)).

COMMITTEE ACTION

Finance, Revenue and Bonding Committee

Joint Favorable

Yea 46  Nay 4  (05/01/2019)