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## December 10, 2021

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### I. State Issues

#### **a. Legislative Alert: A-5862, Responsible Collective Negotiations Bill Before Committee on Monday**

Earlier today we sent [a Legislative Alert](#) regarding the Responsible Collective Negotiations Act ([A-5862/S-3810](#)), which will be considered by the Assembly Labor Committee. This legislation, even with the proposed draft amendments, would substantially expand the power and influence of public sector labor unions to negotiate previously non-negotiable items. It is paramount that you reach out to your [Assembly Representatives and Senators](#) as soon as possible and ask them to oppose A-5862 and S-3810.

This legislation will alter the test for what is a negotiable subject by requiring that a subject is in fact negotiable unless the negotiated agreement would prevent the government from carrying out its statutory mission. In other words, everything would be on the table. Example: the various safety protocols, staff transfers, closed facilities, and deeming certain employees essential during COVID would be subject to negotiations. By requiring the State, as an employer, to negotiate previously non-negotiation items unravels 50 years of clearly defined standards and establishes a precedent for PERC and courts to consider when reviewing county and municipal matters.

Your action is needed to stop this bill. Please contact your Assembly Representatives and State Senator and urge their **opposition** to A-5862 and S-3810.

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- Lori Buckelew, Assistant Executive Director, [lbuckelew@njlm.org](mailto:lbuckelew@njlm.org), 609-695-3481, x112.

## **b. National Opioid Settlement Deadline Fast Approaching**

The January 2, 2022 deadline for municipal participation in the National Opioid Settlement is fast approaching. This week the League hosted a webinar that included speakers from the State Attorney General's Office and Governor's Office, along with others, to discuss the settlement agreements and the process needed for municipal participation.

For more information on the settlement, please see the [website](#) created by the settlement officers. You can also find more information on the Settlement Agreement and the participation process on the League's [Opioid Settlement Resource](#) page.

**Contact:** Frank Marshall, Esq., Associate General Counsel, [FMarshall@njlm.org](mailto:FMarshall@njlm.org), 609-695-3481, x137.

## **c. Senate Panel Approves Bill Restricting Farmland Assessed Properties from Redevelopment Law**

Earlier this week the Senate Economic Growth Committee reviewed and approved [S-4067](#), a bill the League opposes. S-4067 would exclude any farmland assessed land from being designated as a redevelopment area or rehabilitation area under the Local Redevelopment and Housing Law. The League opposes the bill because it is overly broad and restrictive, and limits the effectiveness of a critical tool used by municipalities to combat blight.

It is anticipated that S-4067 will be second reference to the Senate Budget and Appropriations Committee before it moves to a vote before the full Senate. A-5793, the Assembly companion for S-4067, has not yet been scheduled for a committee hearing.

**Contact:** Frank Marshall, Esq., Associate General Counsel, [FMarshall@njlm.org](mailto:FMarshall@njlm.org), 609-695-3481, x137.

## **d. Legislation Permitting Certain Municipalities to Opt-Out of Civil Service Advancing**

On Thursday, the Assembly State and Local Government Committee unanimously approved [A-1335/S-2667](#), which would permit municipalities with a population under 2,500 to withdraw from Civil Service by ordinance. The League testified in support of this legislation as it gives municipalities, many of whom joined Civil Service before today's existing state and federal labor law protections. Having passed the Senate unanimously, the bill now awaits consideration by the full Assembly.

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## **II. Federal Issues**

## **a. Federal Debt Ceiling Resolution**

This week, the House and Senate [passed a one-time rule change](#) to allow the Senate to pass an increase the debt ceiling with a 51 vote margin, instead of the customary 60-vote threshold.

Once this measure is signed into law by President Joe Biden, the House and Senate will pass a measure to increase the amount the nation is authorized to borrow. While that amount is not yet known, it is likely to be large enough that this issue will not need to be revisited by the Congress until 2023.

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## **III. COVID Update**

### **COVID-19 Weekly Update**

During the recent COVID-19 briefing Governor Murphy noted while New Jersey has a confirmed Omicron variant from someone traveling, the Delta variant remains overwhelmingly the variant of concern in New Jersey; that the State is opening a mega vaccine site in Somerset County; and next Wednesday, December 15, the one-year mark of New Jersey administering the first COVID-19 vaccine, will be Boost NJ Day to encourage residents 16 and older to receive their booster shots. The Governor continues to strongly encourage the wearing of masks indoors and when social distancing is not possible and to get vaccinated.

COVID Data for Friday, December 10, 2021:

- 4,782 new positive cases for a total of 1,120,973 confirmed cases
- 17 new confirmed deaths for a total of 25,713 confirmed deaths
- The rate of transmission is at 1.41
- 31 new outbreaks linked within the school setting. This brings the statewide total number of outbreaks directly related to in-school activity since mid-August 2020 to 248 outbreaks linked to 1,345 school outbreaks.
- 12,616,422 vaccine doses have been administered, including 7,025,474 who have received at least one dose, and 6,072,787 who are fully vaccinated. In addition, the following additional doses have been administered: 859,702 of Pfizer, 735,945 of Moderna, and 35,411 of J&J.

### **Vaccine Information**

As a reminder 5- to 11-year-olds in New Jersey are now eligible to receive the pediatric Pfizer vaccine. The vaccine is administered in two doses, three weeks apart and is a lower dose than the dosage for those ages 12 and older. Parents are encouraged to read the [fact sheet](#) and discuss any questions with their pediatrician, family physician, or healthcare provider.

Boosters are now available for all adults 18 years of age or older. All Pfizer and Moderna vaccine recipients are eligible for a booster six months after completing their primary two-

dose series. J&J vaccine recipients are eligible for a booster two months after their primary dose.

Homebound residents who have not yet connected with their local health department, or a home health agency, and who need an in-home vaccination should visit [www.covid19.nj.gov/homeboundvax](http://www.covid19.nj.gov/homeboundvax) or contact the call center at 855-568-0545.

To find a vaccine site visit, including booster information, [www.covid19.nj.gov/vaccine](http://www.covid19.nj.gov/vaccine).

As a reminder, the Department of Health is providing access to individuals COVID vaccination records through [NJ Docket, a secure and free smartphone app](#), which is CDC approved.

### Mental Health Resources

As a reminder, the Department of Children and Families has put together a new page on their COVID information hub with a wealth of mental health support resources for youth, for parents, and for educators. This all can be found at that website, [www.covid19.nj.gov/youthhelp](http://www.covid19.nj.gov/youthhelp).

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