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Legislature Shakes Off Budget Hangover

The legislature will gavel in on Monday after their two-week post budget hiatus. While impacts of the budget continue to be assessed and policy implementation begins at the agency level, the legislature will be shifting its focus to policy and local priorities. The session is scheduled to wrap up in six weeks (19 session days) on June 2 (see "Legislative News" for a link to the session calendar).

Adult Use Cultivation Begins:

The Cannabis Control Board has [approved](#) 52 adult-use cannabis conditional cultivator licenses for growers across New York State. The approved licenses are from a pool of more than 150 that had been submitted to the Office of Cannabis Management (OCM) following the March 15 opening of an online application portal. The OCM has indicated that it will continue to review applications on a rolling basis and work to get them to the Board for approval as quickly as possible. A list of the approved licenses is available [here](#). In February, Governor Hochul signed legislation creating [the Cannabis Conditional Cultivator Licenses](#).

Legislative Redistricting:

The court battle over the newly drawn legislative maps that were adopted by the state legislature this year continues as a [mid-level appellate court ruled](#) the congressional maps enacted in February were improperly gerrymandered. Under the ruling the legislature has until April 30th to submit new maps, however, the decision is expected to be appealed by the state to the top state court the NY Court of Appeals. A spokesman from the Senate Majority claimed the ruling validated the state Senate and Assembly maps.

PSLLC Notes:

- *The Park Strategies team successfully assisted [Hydro-Québec](#) in their efforts to establish an arrangement with the New York State Energy Research and Development Authority (NYSERDA) for the delivery of electricity to New York City by way of the Champlain Hudson Power Express (CHPE) line. Construction will begin in the summer of 2022 with commissioning scheduled for 2025.*
- Greg Serio and Tom Buchan from our Risk and Insurance Practice Group this week traveled to Baltimore to meet with Maryland insurance commissioner Kathleen Birrane to discuss issues of interest to life insurance agents and their clients. In addition to her responsibilities as Maryland insurance commissioner, Birrane also serves as the chair of the National Association of Insurance Commissioners' committee on innovation, cybersecurity and technology, all issues affecting life insurance agents and the people they represent. While extensive in New York, Park's risk and insurance practice is also national in scope and each quarter or more Park's advisers can be found meeting with insurance commissioners and clients from around the country.



Legislative News

Legislative Activity

The Legislature was not in session this week. However, they are scheduled to return to session next week on the 25th, 26th, and 27th.

The *2022 Legislative Calendar* can be accessed [here](#).

Public Hearings

No public hearings are currently scheduled for either house of the legislature. The public hearing calendar can be accessed [here](#).

From the Governor

Budget Line-Item Vetoes

Governor Hochul [announced](#) 33-line-item vetoes in accordance with Article VII of the State Constitution. The full list of vetoes is available [here](#).

Wadsworth Public Health Lab Project Begins

The Governor [announced](#) the award of an initial design contract to advance the creation of a new state-of-the-art public health laboratory on the Harriman State Office Campus Complex in Albany. The state has allocated \$750 million for the project.

Executive Orders:

EO 11 which implements a state of disaster emergency was extended through May 15, 2022 via [EO 11.5](#).

State Agencies

From the New York Office of the Attorney General

NYS AG and Consumer Financial Protection Bureau Sue International Money Transfer Provider

New York Attorney General Letitia James and the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau (CFPB) [filed a lawsuit against one of the largest international money transfer providers in the nation – MoneyGram International, Inc. and MoneyGram Payment Systems, Inc. \(MoneyGram\) – for repeatedly violating consumer protection laws](#). According to the AG and the Bureau, MoneyGram failed to deliver funds to recipients in a timely manner or refund consumers when transfers were delayed. The lawsuit alleges that MoneyGram did not accurately notify consumers when their transfers would be available to recipients abroad and failed to implement required policies and procedures designed to help protect consumers, essentially leaving consumers in the dark about their money transfers when something went wrong.

From the New York Office of the NYS Comptroller

Comptroller: State Pension Fund Calls on Corporations to Address Environmental and Climate Risks

New York State Comptroller Thomas P. DiNapoli [announced](#) that, as a result of recent shareholder proposals he has filed on behalf of the New York State Common Retirement Fund (Fund), companies are taking action to address investment risks posed by climate change and impacts of environmental justice. The Fund engages with portfolio companies on a range of issues to address investment risks and opportunities, including climate issues. It encourages companies to adopt robust climate policies, practices, and disclosures. Shareholder proposals can be an effective way to directly communicate with portfolio companies, their boards and fellow shareholders about transitioning to the low-carbon economy and protecting shareholder value. When filing a shareholder proposal, the Fund seeks a productive dialogue with the company. If the company agrees to implement the proposal's request, it is withdrawn by the Fund.

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