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Other than moving through active lists and committee agendas, this is typically a relatively quiet week in the Capitol as the Legislature continues the budget hearing process and in anticipation of the February Presidents Week break beginning next Monday. During the break staff in Albany generally continues to parse budget proposals and hear input from interested parties. That will likely be the calm before the storm so to speak since following the break, the hearing schedule will wrap up on March 1st, around the same time as the deadline for 30-day amendments to the Governor's budget proposal. The legislature anticipates submitting one-house proposals around mid-March.

In other items of interest, adult use cannabis dispensaries continue to open; the Human Services, Environmental Conservation, and Local Government budget hearings are on deck this week; and legislative session is in action through Wednesday.

Cannabis Adult Use Dispensaries Continue to Open: On February 10th, Governor Kathy Hochul [announced](#) the opening of the third Conditional Adult-Use Retail Dispensary in Manhattan. The dispensary is owned by The Doe Store, a subsidiary of the Doe Fund, a non-profit organization. It will be operated by Harbour Community. Located at 62 East 13th Street, the dispensary will be known as "Union Square Travel Agency: A Cannabis Store." Since 1985, The Doe Fund has helped nearly 30,000 individuals break the devastating cycle of poverty, homelessness, and incarceration. This follows the February 8th announcement that the first of the Conditional Adult-Use Retail Dispensary licenses in the Southern Tier opened in Binghamton on February 10th. The dispensary is called Just Breathe at 75 Court Street, and is owned and operated by a partnership between an experienced local entrepreneur, Damien Cornwell, and the Non-Profit Broome County Urban League.

Budget Hearings: The budget hearing schedule and details regarding testimony and times can be found [here](#).

Note: The Weekly Update will publish on Tuesday, February 21, next week due to the Presidents Day holiday on Monday.



Legislative News

Legislative Activity

The Legislature will be in session on the 13th, 14th, 15th this week and will be off for a February break the next week. The legislature has already introduced approximately 8,785 bills. The Senate and Assembly passed 33 bills in session last week, of note:

~ [S1873 \(Webb\)](#) Changes the maximum number of employees that a minority and women-owned business enterprise may have during a declared state disaster emergency from three hundred employees to three hundred employees who work thirty or more hours per week over the period of fifty-two weeks for a total of 1,560 hours worked.

Public Hearings

~ On February 16th, the Assembly Standing Committee on Children and Families and Subcommittee on Foster Care will host a public hearing on the "status of Mandated Reporters of Child Abuse or Maltreatment in New York State."

~ On March 1st, the Senate Standing Committees on Health and Mental Health will host a public hearing to "receive testimony on how to identify and examine best practices for integrating doulas into New York's maternal healthcare system, as well as recommendations for policies that provide sustainable Medicaid reimbursement rates for doulas."

From the Governor

\$234 Million in Additional Food Assistance for February

On February 10th, Governor Kathy Hochul announced that all New Yorkers enrolled in the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program will receive a supplemental allotment of food benefits for February, including those already receiving the maximum allowable level. All households, including currently receiving the maximum benefit and households that formerly would have received a monthly supplement of less than \$95, will receive a supplement of at least \$95.

Executive Orders:

There were no new Executive Orders issued this week.

State Agencies

From the New York Office of the Attorney General

Attorney General James Announces Multistate Coalition to Defend and Protect Access to Medication Abortion

On February 10th, Attorney General James announced the establishment of a multistate coalition to defend and protect safe access to medication abortion nationwide. In *Alliance of Hippocratic Medicine v. U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA)*, a case pending in the U.S. District Court for the Northern District of Texas, Attorney General James and 22 other attorneys general ask the court to reject a challenge brought by anti-abortion groups seeking to revoke the FDA's approval of the medication abortion drug, mifepristone. An [amicus brief filed](#) warns that withdrawing federal approval for mifepristone would drastically reduce access to safe abortion care and miscarriage management for millions of people across the country where abortion is legal, like New York State.

From the New York Office of the Comptroller

Comptroller Calls on Companies to Adopt Improved Worker's Rights Policies

On February 7th, Comptroller DiNapoli [announced](#) a series of shareholder proposals filed at several major companies on workers' freedom of association and collective bargaining rights. The proposals were filed with Walmart Inc., CVS Pharmacy Inc., Netflix Inc., DoorDash Inc. and Gannett Co. The filings ask their boards to adopt and publicly disclose a policy on their commitment to respect their employees' rights to freedom of association and collective bargaining in their operations.

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