



What's Up in the Legislature

(April 9, 2007)

It is hardly worthwhile putting out a report for the week. The Legislature has taken its usual Easter break, and none of the bills that we have been following have moved or been declared legally dead.

The only good news is that Senator Bee, the Senate president, has said that they have finished the budget with the exception of a few large departments. He said it is time for the House to come up with something that they can sit down and discuss.

SB 1446 (the payday loan bill) has not yet reached the Rules agenda for tomorrow, April 10. It has, however, brought up more controversy. Representative Marian McClure, R-Tucson, has said that she will try to get an initiative on the 2008 ballot to outlaw the critters. She says she recognizes the difficulty of doing such an initiative, but that she hopes to enlist Democrats, Republicans, and ACORN who she says is responsible for the minimum wage package that the voters approved in 2006.

Lee Miller of the Payday Loan Association says they will spend what they need to defeat the measure.

Lucy Howell says that the Jacki Taylor of the AZ Coalition to End Homelessness stated that they were being told that the concept of using unclaimed lottery funds for funding for homelessness (per striker bill introduced by Rep. Meza) was being added to the budget process. They expect opposition from those wanting all funds in the general fund. However, the bill has never made it further than the Health Committee.

Senate President Bee has failed to comment on the behavior of Senator Jack Harper, R-Surprise, who made some exceptionally egregious comments as he gavelled the end of a hearing on problems at the State Veterans home. Democrats and Republicans alike reacted to the incident, and Harper was silent at the next hearing.

As I stated, there is nothing worth reporting for the week.