



What's Up in the Legislature

(June 2, 2007)

The House has scheduled two COW Calendars for Monday, and one 3rd Reading. None of the great total of four bills has any connection with our objectives. The Senate doesn't even acknowledge that they will be going on the Floor, at least, to count the number of senators who came to the Capitol.

There are no conference committees scheduled, so no movement of SB 1446, the payday loan bill.

Most action, if any, is on the budget. The money in both the Senate and House version is nearly identical, but there is a large difference in how it is distributed. The House looks to cutting taxes while the Senate has been taking care of health and welfare programs. Russell Pearce, House appropriations chair, says that there is a difference in the Senate and House philosophies, and he expects the House will not give in to the Senate. That accounts for \$48 million in the budget packages.

The Arizona Republic reported this morning that Maricopa County Medical Center is refusing to sign off on the transfer of \$59 million in federal funds that has gone to the state for redistribution to counties serving the indigent and uninsured after the expansion of the AHCCCS program in 2000.

Tom Boone, House majority leader, says it is a problem for the Governor and AHCCCS. Bob Burns, Senate appropriations chair, says it leaves the state budget \$55 million short.

Tune in next week to see if the Legislature will adjourn this year at all. They still have a way to go to beat the record, Sine Die in July, but they seemed bent on doing their best to tie it.