



What's Up in the Legislature

(December 8, 2007)

Legislature

T'was the month before Session and all through the week, not a creature was stirring, not even a mouse. Well not all rodents were quiet; lobbyists are roaming the halls looking for absent legislators to put in bills for them.

The House had one new pre-filed bill, HB 2012 (out-of-state driver licenses; identification purposes), and the Senate added ten. Of interest to SVdP are the following:

- SB 1021 (community notification)
- SB 1023 (accountable health plans; claim history)
- SB 1024 (cities; campaign finance; website)
- SB 1025 (scholarships; disabled pupils; good cause)
- SB 1028 (minimum wage; conflicting law; repeal)

SB 1028 SB 1028 was introduced by Senator Tibshraeny. It repeals the following conflicting language that was put into law in 1997:

“A. The legislature declares that the establishment of a uniform minimum wage is a matter of statewide concern.

B. No political subdivision of this state may establish, mandate or otherwise require a minimum wage that exceeds the federal minimum wage prescribed in 29 United States Code section 206.”

Immigration

The suit against the employer sanctions law as thrown out of court. U.S. District Judge Neil Wake ruled that the business and Latino groups opposed to the law should be suing the governor and the state attorney general, instead of the 15 county attorneys. He also suggested that no one had yet been injured by the law because it does not take effect until January. -- The attorneys opposing the law have agreed to sue again.

Budget Problems

The Joint Legislative Budget Committee (JLBC) report that three of the major revenue categories:

- Sales tax collections declined (0.8)% since October 2006, and were \$(34.7) million short of the monthly forecast.
 - Individual income tax collections were down (9.7)%, which was \$(49.0) million below forecast.
 - Corporate income tax collections were 4.1% above last year, and \$2.6 million above the forecast.
- Despite the increase in corporate income tax collections there is still little more than gloom in the expectations.

One bright spot, at least for the JLBC, is that AHCCCS reported in its semi-annual report that total statewide Healthcare Group enrollment has declined by 930 people to 25,984 people as of October 13, 2007. AHCCCS also reported it made other changes to the program including increased premiums, co-payments, and deductibles. NO WONDER ENROLLMENT DROPPED.

Unless activity picks up there may be no need for these reports until after Christmas
In the meantime disregard all the gloom and doom and have Merry Christmas.

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