



What's Up in the Legislature

(March 30, 2008)

The Legislature and the Governor's office are furiously negotiating the budget this weekend. Possibly this should read the furious Legislature and furious Governor's office are negotiating the budget. No news is supposed to be good news. Keep it in mind.

Please note that the bill summary below contains four that are marked either HCR or SCR. This stands for House Concurrent Resolution and Senate Concurrent Resolution; when passed by both Houses, they can be placed on the ballot as referendums without review by the governor.

HCR 2039 (illegal aliens; enforcement; trespassing) is still awaiting its chance to pass the HOUSE Committee of the Whole (COW). This HCR is OPPOSED by the SVdP Diocesan Council Board. It creates the crime of "felony trespass" in AZ for undocumented and mandates that all local, county and state law enforcement officials verify the citizenship of anyone arrested. As created by this legislation, the crime of "felony trespass" means that the individual becomes permanently ineligible to apply for legalized status in the U.S.

SCR 1028 (public gifts; loans) This bill passed Senate Financial Institutions and Retirement in February, but, according to ALIS, it is still awaiting a hearing the Senate Rules.

HB 2220 (state equalization property tax repeal.) This bill passed the House on a 32-28-0 vote. It has been 1st Read in the Senate.

Other bills I have been tracking are listed below by category. Please review and let me know your suggestions for additions or deletions. Thank you.

Tax related bills:

HB 2693 (tax credit; charitable organizations) was never heard by the Rules committee. Makes several modifications to the eligibility for the individual income tax credit for donations to charitable organizations for the working poor. (*While SVdP and other non-profits support simplification of the AZ charitable tax credit by elimination of the baseline year requirement, it is unlikely that this bill will go anywhere during the time of budget shortfalls*).

SB 1002 (state equalization property tax repeal) Never 3rd Read. See HB 2220 above.

HB 2550 (earned income tax credit) Never heard in committee. (*Again, this would create an Arizona earned income tax credit patterned after the federal earned income tax credit. It is a way to get additional cash to the working poor but, again, is unlikely to move during a time of budget shortfall*).

Archives of Weekly Updates are available at

<http://www.stvincentdepaul.net/VOP_WklyLegislativeUpdates.htm>

HB 2642 (tax simplification; income tax repeal) Never heard in committees.

HCR 2066 (legislative right to reduce appropriations) Upon voter approval, would permit the Legislature to reduce any appropriation or spending requirement whether enacted by the Legislature, initiative, or referendum. The bill was HELD in House Appropriations

Immigration bills:

HB 2631 (marriage license; proof of citizenship) Never heard in committees.

SB 1072 (AHCCCS; proof of citizenship) Passed Public Safety and Human Services on a 4-3-0 vote. It was never heard in the Senate Health committee.

HB 2625 (illegal aliens; commercial transactions)

This bill prohibits landlords from knowingly or recklessly renting or leasing dwellings to illegal aliens, authorizes the forfeiture of property used to transport or house a person who is in Arizona illegally, and allows the denial, suspension or revocation of licenses issued to dealers or sales finance companies that have been convicted of or that are engaging in certain illegal activities.

Passed House Judiciary and Appropriations, but was Retained on the COW Calendar on March 26. It could be back on the Calendar this week.

HCR2064 (local enforcement; immigration) Passed the House Counties, Municipalities, and Military Affairs committee in February, but has never come out of the Rules committee. This is another potential referendum for voters. It essentially requires training for immigration enforcement by local law enforcement officials.

Payday loans:

SB 1239 (deferred presentment transactions; regulations) It passed Senate Financial Institutions and Retirement on a 3-2-0 vote. It was placed on the Consent Calendar, but there was an objection and the bill was never placed on a COW Calendar.

SB 1492 (payday loans; repeal termination date) This bill was HELD in Senate Financial Institutions and Retirement.

Affordable housing:

HB 2571 (low income housing; property tax) HB 2571 requires county assessors to evaluate low income multifamily residential rental property using an income-based approach and a capitalization rate of fifteen per cent and to exclude federal tax credits from the assessment. It passed the House on a 59-1-0 vote. Rep. Trish Groe was the nay. It was first read in the Senate on March 27.

Welfare: drug testing:

HB 2678 (drug testing; welfare recipients) This bill was HELD in House Appropriations. There was information that a similar bill in another state was held unconstitutional.