



What's Up in the Legislature

(June 28, 2008)

In the words of Alfredo Gutierrez as he moved to adjourn the Senate Sine Die some years ago, "Plop, Plop, Fizz, Fizz, Oh what a relief it is!"

The Legislature adjourned Sine Die on the 27th at 10:09 p.m.

They have finally adjourned, and while the budget is bare bones with its 20% plus cut, it is not as bad as it could have been.

The Senate budget that put borrowing and cutting on a 50-50 basis prevailed over the House's 25% borrowing and 75% cutting. The Senate version was worked out between both parties and the Governor.

Moderate Republicans joined with the Democrats in both Houses to pass the budget package. Some members feel the adopted budget will lead to disaster and require a Special Session to bring it in line with expected revenue. Those who voted for the package feel that it made the cuts that were needed, and that the state programs will not be shut down.

Most social program supported by St. Vincent de Paul as crucial to the Arizona safety net will continue, albeit with some restrictions and cuts. I will try to get more info by early next week.

The good news from the Session is that both HCR 2072, repeal of the state equalization property tax, and HCR 2073, repeal of the state property tax, will not be on the ballot in November. HCR 2039 which would have created the category of felony trespassers for undocumented will also not be on the ballot.

The bill to raise the population of counties that elect their judges from 250,000 to 800,000 failed to make it through the Senate.