

WHAT'S UP AT THE LEGISLATURE

As of 06 09 09

As all know by now, the Legislature has passed out a very shameful budget further cutting a number of state programs for those who cannot help themselves. The Senate votes on the budget bills were consistently 16-1-13 along party lines.

The House vote on the bills was generally 32-24-4 also along party lines. A reliable source says that some House members were planning on being "No" votes but were persuaded to support the bills when assured that they were not final and were being put forth merely to open discussion with the governor.

However, the budget bills have not been transmitted to the governor and Leadership's meeting with the Governor Brewer on Monday went nowhere. As a result, Governor Brewer has called for meetings with stakeholders centered on education, health and human services, public safety, local government and transportation – areas where the governor opposes cuts made in the Legislature's budget.

Bill Status:

The Senate will now hear bills – nearly 500 have been introduced in the Senate. President Burns admits he may have waited too long with less than 3 weeks remaining in the session.

In Senate Appropriations met June 9, Tuesday, at 1:30 are the following problematic bills:

S.C.R. 1009 (voter-protection; temporary budgetary suspension) Pearce, Harper, Court, Kavanagh and Burges

This bill, *subject to voter approval*, constitutionally grants the Legislature authority, in order to avoid a budget deficit, to appropriate or divert funds created or enacted by an initiative or referendum. This bill has the potential to dismantle programs (such as coverage expansion of AHCCCS to 100% of the federal poverty) passed by the people of Arizona when the legislature did not act.

S.B. 1013 (AHCCCS; ambulance services) Harper

Eliminates nonambulance and nonemergency transportation as a covered medical service in Arizona Health Care Cost Containment System (AHCCCS) acute care and long-term care health plans and in contracts with qualifying community health centers.

S.C.R. 1006 (state appropriation limit; reduction) Pearce, Gorman, Court

Upon voter approval, specifies methods for determining maximum limits on state appropriations for FY 2010-2011 and each year after. This is another attempt to cut the amount of appropriations. The limit is set at 7% of estimated income. Colorado has passed this type of restriction and found that there are unintended consequences.

In Senate Public Safety and Human Services on Wed. June 10 at 8:30 a.m.:

SB 1175 (illegal aliens, enforcement, trespass) Pearce, Harper

Defines status of illegal aliens as criminal trespassers with various penalties. Criminal status would preclude undocumented persons from legalizing their status at any time in the future.

On a positive note...

Second Read in Senate on June 9:

HB 2091 (charitable organizations, solicitations and disclosure) Reagan, et. al. simplifies charitable deduction for working poor by eliminating the baseline year requirement.

In the House:

In House Rules on June 9:

H.C.R. 2014

Similar to Proposition 101 (defeated by voters last November) would amend AZ Constitution to prohibit law or rule from requiring participation in healthcare coverage. (*Requires voter approval*).

