

WHAT'S UP IN THE LEISLATURE?

JUNE 14, 2009

Rumors and Reports

The report is that Legislative Majority leadership ARE meeting with the Governor this weekend to work on the budget compromise. Didn't I say that last week?

Rumor has it that Senator Burns is willing to go for an increase in the sales tax rate with the electorate making the decision in the general election of 2010.

The Senate is moving bills as though there is no tomorrow. There appears to be little discussion and most of the bills move on party-line votes.

Heading for the House....

Contact your two State Representatives and urge a **NO** vote on SB 1175.
(www.azleg.gov. Click on "Find My Legislators")

SB 1175 (illegal aliens, enforcement)

This bill 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*.

This bill has passed Senate COW, and is up for 3rd Read tomorrow, June 15. This bill and others like it were vetoed last year by Governor Napolitano. It is an irony that the Arizona legislature would contemplate passing such a law when immigration reform remains a stated agenda item at the federal level.

Problematic...Initiatives and Referenda (SCR and HCR's) are VERY difficult to undo.....

Senate Appropriations, Tuesday, June 16 at 1:30 p.m.

SCR 1009 (voter-protection; temporary budgetary suspension)

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 could undo programs passed by voters through the initiative process. (The bill requires the legislature and governor sign off on a finding by the State Treasurer of an anticipated deficit of more than one per cent of general fund revenues is anticipated for two quarters).

SCR 1006 (state appropriation limit; reduction)

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 overall amount of appropriations. The limit is presently set at 7% of estimated income. The bill cuts the maximum appropriation to 6.4%. Legislative remedies are very difficult to undo. This limit could hurt the state when it recovers from the current downturn and begins to experience a high growth rate.

Going to the Senate...

HCR 2014 (NOW: health care services; direct purchase)

This constitutional amendment is similar to Proposition 101 (defeated by voters last November) would amend the AZ Constitution to prohibit any law or rule from requiring participation in healthcare coverage. (It requires voter approval). It passed the House on a 34-19-7 vote. It has been assigned to Senate Health.

Also in Senate Approps on Tuesday...

S.B. 1013 (AHCCCS; ambulance services)

(This bill will impact patients and elderly who live at or below the federal poverty level and lack transportation alternatives).

This bill 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

On a positive note... 2 bills in Senate Commerce on Tuesday to support!

Senate Commerce on Tuesday June 16, SHR 1

HB 2091 (charitable organizations, solicitations and disclosure) Reagan, et. al.

This simplifies charitable deductions to nonprofit agencies that assist the working poor by eliminating the baseline year requirement in the tax code and is supported by SVdP.

SB 1108 (landlords; foreclosures; tenant notice)

This bill requires residential property owners to notify tenants in writing of any foreclosure action against the leased property.