



What's Up in the Legislature

(April 12, 2008)

Budget? What's a budget? There is still no word.

BILLS

SB 1508 (provisions; Arizona temporary worker program) and its House counterpart, HB 2791 (Arizona temporary worker program; provisions) have both passed out of their assigned standing committees and await hearings in the Rules committees of their respective houses. Even if it passes, it needs federal legislation, not likely, to become effective.

HCR 2044 (voter-protection; temporary budgetary suspension) was HELD in Senate Appropriations last week, but is on the committee's agenda for April 15. Some folks feel that is appropriate, but even if they fix the loopholes it is still a bad bill. Essentially would place a referendum on the ballot asking voters if funding for initiatives could be suspended during times of deficit. Two initiatives supported by SVdP that would be impacted if the referendum was passed are Prop 204 which raised the eligibility for AHCCCS to 100% of the federal poverty level and First Things First (early childhood development and health screening).

HCR 2039 (illegal aliens; enforcement; trespassing) passed House COW on April 8. It should pass the House this week. Please contact your state senator and ask them to vote nay on this turkey. It creates a new category, "felony trespass" for persons here illegally. Once a felony is on record, application for legal status is prohibited. It will be a referendum which means no review by the governor.

HB2258 (civil air patrol; hangar space (NOW: civil air patrol; funding) This bill is subject to a Strike Everything amendment. We expect that HB 2625 (illegal aliens; commercial transactions) is the subject of the amendment, and it is scheduled for April 15 in Senate Appropriations. This bill prohibits landlords from knowingly or recklessly renting or leasing dwellings to illegal aliens, and authorizes the forfeiture of property used to transport or house a person who is in Arizona in violation of 8 United States Code (U.S.C.) § 1325, 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. This bill didn't make it out of the House. Let's make sure it doesn't make it out of the Senate.

HB2220 (state equalization property tax repeal) passed the Senate on a 16-13 vote, and it is in the Governor's hands. Hopefully she will veto it. Both Senator Allen and O'Halleran deserve thanks for their courage in voting no when the Majority caucus was in favor of it. They both felt that during time of budget crisis, it was not appropriate to permanently eliminate this property tax..