



What's Up in the Legislature

VOP Weekly Legislative Briefing by Tom Finnerty – Jan. 1, 2009 Arizona State Legislature - 49th Session

President-elect Obama takes his oath of office on January 20th.

The U.S. Congress convenes next Tuesday, January 6. The Senate is still faced with a few problems. Notably, the Senate race in Minnesota is still in dispute, and will most likely face some court challenges. Then, there is the replacement for Barack Obama. Will Burris be seated or no? That is the question.

Our Legislature will convene, as required by the Constitution, Monday January 12. Governor Janet Napolitano will give her State of the State address. A message the Republican Majority in both Houses will likely ignore.

Within two weeks or so of the convening of the Legislature, the Governor will leave to become head of Homeland Security, and Governor-in-Waiting Jan Brewer will take over. Whether she will give her own State of the State or not is unknown. However, she will be working with the Legislature on the budgets.

The Joint Legislative Budget Committee (JLBC) reports that November sales and income tax collections were down.

Adding to the gloom is the report in the Republic this morning that the Phoenix budget will look to cuts in programs for seniors and the homeless.

The House finally has some prefiled bills and the Senate total is now at 41. Senator Pearce has opened more than a dozen, all dealing with technicalities. These can be used later for just about anything he wants using the legislative process called "Strike Everything".

Two bills dealing with AHCCCS have been put on the VOP "watch list".