



News from Inside the Capitol

Volume 13

March 7, 2007

Today is the last day for bills to pass out of committees and be reported to the floor to be read three times on three consecutive days unless rules are suspended. The House rarely suspends rules, however, in the Senate it is sometimes easier.

Senate bills 749, 750, 751 and 752, which are tax bills, all appear to be dead this session. The good thing is that these bills have been on the table and they should be addressed next year.

There are four bills in the Legislature that would either **add money or subtract money from the State Road Fund**. H.B. 2877 and S.B. 690 would add about \$27.5 million. H.B. 2775 and S.B. 569 would delete about \$9.3 million in funding. The first three bills below are poised to complete the legislative process. A synopsis of these bills and their impact on the state Road Fund are provided below:

HB 2877 - Discontinue the funding from the State Road Fund of the Public Service Commission weight enforcement division and the State Police patrol of roads; authorize the funding for the Public Service Commission weight enforcement division and the State Police patrol of roads from the General Revenue Fund; and authorize the funding of the courtesy patrol program from the tourism promotion fund. The bill has passed the House and is waiting action by the Senate Finance Committee. This bill would add \$14.5 million.

HB 2775 - Exempting new West Virginia residents from payment of the state's 5-percent privilege tax upon a showing that the applicant was not a resident of this state at the time the vehicle was purchased. The bill passed the House and is in Senate Finance. This bill would delete approximately \$5 million. This bill would delete \$4.3 million.

HB 569 - which creates a **special fuels taxes for deposit in Special Railroad Fund** has passed in the House and we expect the Senate to concur. We are very fortunate that an amendment was added to this bill where the funding will come from general revenue instead of the highway fund. Without this amendment it would have deleted \$4.3 million.

SB 690 - The purpose of this bill is to return to the Division of Highways the **sales tax collected on materials purchased by highway contractors** for use in highway construction and maintenance projects. This bill will be addressed in Senate Finance today. This bill would add approximately \$13 million.

HB 2955 - dealing with the continuation of the **flat-rate excise tax on motor fuels at .2050** passed in Senate Finance yesterday. All of the amendments that had been placed in the bill by the House, which would have used part of the money collected in the same manner as the budget digest, were taken out of the bill.

SB 490—regarding the **Underground Storage Tank Insurance Fund** will pass today in the house. We have asked the Senate Finance Chairman to concur with the amendments made to the bill.

SB 738—Requiring WV Parkways, Economic Development and Tourism Authority present proposed **toll revision** to Joint Committee on Government and Finance will pass but has been changed so that revisions don't have to come to the Legislature. Apparently this can't be done because of bonding.

HB 2741 regarding **worthless checks** should pass in the Senate today. We asked Chairwoman Webster to concur with the Senate amendment. (This is an excellent bill for retailers. We will give full details on this legislation when we print our Legislative Summary next week.)

A publication of



SB 712 - relating to wine regulations. We have had numerous problems getting this bill on the House agenda. It has been pulled off the active calendar. We will update you later with progress.

HB 2956 –the venue bill has passed without amendment in Senate Judiciary. It should be reported to the floor today and should pass without issue.

SB 194 - relating to appeals bonds has passed House Judiciary and has been reported to the floor.

Being that this is the last few days of the session, things are moving very quickly. We will be sending out a full summary of the session to members the middle of next week.