

JOHN BARDGETT & ASSOCIATES

Governmental & Public Relations Consultants

LEGISLATIVE REPORT

TO: MAPA

FROM: John E. Bardgett, Jr.

DATE: April 17, 2014

RE: Legislative Activity – Week 15
April 14 - 17, 2014

The General Assembly will not work on Monday, April 21st in observance of the Easter holiday. Session will reconvene on Tuesday, April 22nd with the House convening at 3:00 p.m. and the Senate at 4:00 p.m. There are four weeks left in the session before final adjournment on Friday, May 16th per the constitution.

How well do you know the State of Missouri?

The trivia question for this week is ... *According to the 2000 Census, which city has the larger population? **Kansas City** or **St. Louis***

The answer can be found at the end of the report.

Income Tax Cut Bill Sent to Governor

The House on Wednesday, April 16th voted 104-48 for SB 509 – sponsored by Sen. Kraus (R – Lee's Summit) and the bill has been sent to Governor Nixon for his action. The bill would cut income taxes by \$620 million, gradually phasing in a reduction of the top personal income tax rate to 5.5 percent from 6 percent and phase in a 25 percent deduction for business income reported on individual returns.

Governor Nixon quickly issued a press release calling the bill a "reckless fiscal experiment," saying that this bill will take millions of dollars from public education and other state funded priorities. He stopped short of saying he will veto the bill, promising a thorough review, however, there is little doubt that he will use his veto pen.

The House was four votes short of the 108 needed to override a veto, but House leaders held a press conference after the vote to show that the caucus is united this year. Nixon vetoed a similar measure last year and was able to sustain his veto when fifteen Republicans sided with him.

The Governor has 15 days to take action on the bill, the House has promised a quick override vote which could take place during the regular session that ends on May 16th.

E-Cigs / Vapor Debate

Both the House and Senate debated bills dealing with e-cigarettes and vapor products. The House gave first round approval to HCS / HB 1690 – sponsored by Rep. Rowden (R – Columbia) that prohibits the sale of alternative nicotine or vapor products to minors and the use or possession of such products in any public elementary or secondary school building. The bill now awaits one final vote by the House before moving to the Senate for committee assignment. The Senate debated SB 841 – sponsored by Sen. Wasson (R – Nixa), a similar measure on Wednesday, April 16th. The bills do not seek to tax or regulate the products as tobacco, merely to ban sales to minors. Both bills were third read and finally passed by their respective chambers on Thursday, April 17th. HB 1690 now moves to the Senate for committee assignment and SB 841 now moves to the House for committee assignment.

Senate Committee Hears Transportation Tax Proposal

The Senate Transportation Committee on Wednesday heard HJR 68 – sponsored by Rep. Hinson (R – St. Clair) and SJR 48 – sponsored by Sen. Kehoe (R – Jefferson City) both would impose a one-cent temporary sales tax for the purpose of transportation funding if approved by the people. The bill was voted out of the committee by a vote of 6-1 with Sen. Lamping (R – St. Louis County) the only dissenting vote. The Senate Transportation Committee also heard Sen. Kehoe's (R – Jefferson City) SJR 48, the companion Senate bill and voted out that bill with the same 6-1 vote. HJR 68 now awaits debate by the full Senate. Sen. Lamping has stated publicly that he has the same objections to the bill as he had last session.

Bonding Proposal Takes Another Step

SB 723 – sponsored by Sen. Parson (R – Bolivar) is the bonding proposal that would raise the debt ceiling allowing for deferred maintenance on state owned and higher education buildings. This bill was heard in the House Budget Committee on Tuesday, April 15th. Many higher education institutions testified in support of the bill, including Zora Mulligan on behalf of the Missouri Community College Association. There was no further action taken on the bill.

Budget Update

The Senate Appropriations Committee took an unusual turn this week and cancelled all of their hearings. With the cancellations occurring, the committee has yet to complete a second round of review on the budget line items that remain open for further discussion. The committee also has budget items related to flexibility and language to approve or amend before they can vote the budget bills out of their committee. To review the budget line items that remain open for further discussion, you may click on the following link: <http://www.senate.mo.gov/14info/comm/budgetnotes/OpenItems.pdf>

On Tuesday, April 22nd, the committee is expected to hold a hearing to work through the remaining open items, flexibility, and language. Once they finish, the committee will vote the budget bills out, which will place them on the Senate calendar for debate.

The Missouri State Budget must be passed by the Constitutional deadline of May 9, which leaves three weeks to complete the negotiations.

Other Bills of Interest

HCS / HB 2271 – sponsored by Rep. Dugger (R – Hartville) changes the laws regarding elections and early voting if approved by the people. This bill was given first round approval by the House of Representatives on Wednesday, April 16th. On Thursday, April 17th, this bill was third read and passed and now moves to the Senate for committee assignment.

HCS / HJR 90 – sponsored by Rep. Dugger (R – Hartville) proposes a constitutional amendment requiring the establishment of a six-week early voting period for all elections except local, special district, and municipal elections. This bill was perfected and given final approval by the House of Representatives on Thursday. The bill now moves to the Senate for committee assignment.

Trivia Question Answer

According to the 2000 Census, which city has the larger population? Kansas City