



ISSUE 2 - JANUARY 14, 2011

Eye on the Capitol

Because of the tragic events of last weekend, Arizona's 50th Legislature convened on Monday, January 10 on a somber note. Governor Brewer shelved her policy-laden state-of-the-state address and instead delivered a tribute to the victims of the shooting. The Governor does intend to release her plan for job creation, education and tax reform in short order. The text of her remarks to the Legislature [can be viewed here](#).

Legislative activity during the first week of the session was light. A few committees met for organizational and housekeeping purposes, and the House Committee on Employment and Regulatory Affairs did hold a hearing to consider [four bills affecting the Arizona State Retirement System](#).

The House and Senate moved with lightning speed to pass bipartisan legislation, signed by the Governor, to impose limits on protests at memorial services. The law was a response to plans of the Westboro Baptist Church to demonstrate at the funerals of individuals killed in Saturday's shooting rampage in Tucson.

To date, lawmakers have introduced a total of 347 bills in the House and Senate. 144 of these measures - or 41% of all bills introduced - are categorized as "technical correction" bills. Such bills, often containing minor or grammatical changes to current law - are frequently used as "striker" vehicles for ideas that surface after bill-filing deadlines. The large number of technical corrections bills suggests that legislators are eager to preserve their ability to introduce new measures into the legislative process after the formal deadlines for the introduction of bills: January 31 in the Senate and February 7 in the House.

League staff reviews every introduced bill to analyze its potential impact on cities and towns. We are ever appreciative of input we receive from our membership with respect to introduced, potential or proposed legislation.

State Budget

Governor Brewer's proposed budget for Fiscal Year 2012, released today, contains a number of initiatives designed to close a substantial state budget deficit, projected at \$825 million for the current year and \$1.4 billion for next year. To bring the budget into balance, the plan relies heavily on reductions to the Arizona Health Care Cost Containment System.

The commitment by the League of Arizona Cities and Towns to work as a cooperative partner with the Governor and legislative leaders to address the state's budget crisis is paying substantial dividends. While cities and towns will be asked to contribute to deficit reduction in some measure, the Governor's budget protects major sources of municipal revenue. We will continue to work closely with key decision-makers to promote a budget plan conducive to the economic growth of the cities and the state. League staff will perform a detailed analysis of the budget and report on those items that affect cities and towns. An electronic version of the Governor's proposed budget [can be found here](#).

Pension Reform Update

On January 11, the House Employment and Regulatory Affairs Committee conducted a hearing on a package of four bills introduced by the chairman of the committee, Representative Bob Robson (R-Chandler). These bills represent the Arizona State Retirement System's (ASRS) legislative agenda for the year and contain mostly administrative changes.

HB 2023 ASRS; long-term disability amendments stipulates that long-term disability benefits are not payable on claims filed more than 24 months after the date of the disability and authorizes ASRS to suspend or terminate benefits if a retiree fails to provide requested information. The bill was passed out of committee.

HB 2024 ASRS; amendments contains the same provisions as HB 2023 and HB 2027. Additionally, the bill makes numerous changes to the statutes governing ASRS, including the method by which charter city retirement credits transfer to ASRS and the collection of delinquent payments. The bill was passed out of committee.

HB2026 ASRS; administration makes administrative changes to the operations of ASRS, including exempting ASRS from the state's rulemaking procedures. There was extended discussion about the rulemaking exemption, which resulted in the bill being held.

HB2027 ASRS; return to work; contributions requires certain persons who return to work to repay ASRS for payments improperly received. Additionally, the bill requires employers to pay an alternate contribution rate (ACR) for retired members who return to work and specifies how the ACR is calculated. Finally, the bill appropriates \$150,000 from the ASRS administration account for the implementation of these provisions. The bill was passed out of committee.

The League has not taken a formal position on this particular package of bills but will continue to closely monitor all legislation - and participate in the policy discussion - regarding pension reform.

Hazardous and Solid Waste Program Fees

Arizona State Representative Amanda Reeve and the Arizona Department of Environmental Quality have issued an invitation to stakeholders to participate in a January 24 discussion of options for permanent adjustments to program fees designed to make the Solid and Hazardous Waste Programs self-sufficient. At the meeting, Rep. Reeve and ADEQ will discuss funding requirements, identify potential funding options, explain the legislative process (including timeframes) and solicit informal public comment on proposed changes to solid waste and hazardous waste fees. If you are interested in attending, please RSVP to wpdfees@azdeq.gov by January 17, 2011.

Meeting Information

Waste Programs Division
Hazardous and Solid Waste Program Fees
Legislative Meeting

January 24, 2011
10:00 - 11:30 a.m.
Arizona Department of Environmental Quality, Room 3175A&B
1110 W. Washington Street, Phoenix

Legislator Profile - Representative Jeff Dial

When asked whether he might have some time within the next several weeks to sit down and discuss his membership in the House of Representatives, freshman Representative Jeff Dial responds, "What are you doing right now?" This no-time-like-the-present perspective will serve Rep. Dial well as he is called upon to address state challenges that are urgent and immediate.

Disarming and humble, Rep. Dial, age 34, is a Chandler Republican elected in 2010 to represent District 20. He addresses visitors as "sir" and is unfailingly polite, respectful and accessible. Exuding an appreciative manner, Rep. Dial clearly feels fortunate to have the opportunity to serve in the Arizona House.

The third time was a charm for Rep. Dial, who narrowly failed to win two previous primary bids for the House, losing each contest by less than one percent. An exuberant extrovert, Mr. Dial has knocked on more than 30,000 doors in his legislative campaigns.

Rep. Dial has resided in each of the three municipalities within District 20 - Phoenix, Chandler and Tempe - and understands the enormous challenges and responsibilities of cities and towns, which provide critical services to his urban constituents. Rep. Dial himself is a fan of Chandler's recreational facilities in general and its dog parks in particular.

His chief legislative priorities are the creation of jobs and the growth of business opportunities. He has been rewarded by House leadership with the vice chairmanship of the Banking and Insurance Committee and also serves on the Military Affairs and Public Service Committee.

A California native who grew up in Glendora, Rep. Dial moved to Arizona eleven years ago to attend Arizona State University as a political science major. He is the executive vice president of a family business, Dial Chemical Inc., and a licensed real estate agent. He likes hiking, movies and science fiction.

Rep. Dial's recent election is a tribute to the virtues of perseverance and dogged pursuit of a dream. The League of Arizona Cities and Towns congratulates Rep. Dial and looks forward to working with him throughout the 50th Legislature.

League Intern

The Legislative Department welcomes Amy Price as our intern for the first session of the 50th Legislature. Amy is a Justice Studies major at Arizona State University and will be graduating this spring. She originally hails from El Centro, California.



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Forward your comments or suggestions to league@azleague.org.