



*67 Counties, **One** Voice*
In the Alabama Legislature

LEGISLATIVE REPORT

Friday, April 24, 2015

Yesterday marked the end of the 16th legislative day for the Alabama Legislature. Next week is expected to be another two day work week, and both chambers will reconvene next Tuesday: the Senate at 10:00 a.m. and the House at 1:00 p.m.

Below is an overview of this week's activities at the State House. County officials and employees are encouraged to pay special attention to the updates on prison reform legislation, the guns bills, and the probate judge pay raise. Please contact the Association staff if you have any questions about the contents of this report.

PROBATE JUDGE PAY RAISE

As previously reported, Senate Judiciary chairman Senator Ward tabled the committee vote on [SB 369 by Sen. Tom Whatley](#) until next Wednesday. It was evident at this Wednesday's hearing that many county officials and employees have already contacted members of the Senate Judiciary. The Association staff would like to thank everyone who reached out to Senators about this dangerous bill!

Those whose schedules permit are urged to attend next week's hearing. The Senate Judiciary committee's standing meeting time is on Wednesdays at 1:00pm in Room 325. The Association staff will send an update if something changes, but in the meantime, county officials and employees who have yet to speak with their Senator are encouraged to contact them ahead of next week's committee meeting.

When speaking with Senators, please be sure to reference the [County-by-County analysis on SB 369](#) as well as the [Fiscal Note for SB 369](#). Use these two documents to help them understand the long-term costs this bill would have on county general funds **and** the state general fund. Also consider referencing the opinion editorial published on the Montgomery Advertiser website yesterday titled, [Probate Judges Bill Unfunded Mandate](#).

Senate Judiciary Committee Members: Sen. Ward, Chair; Sens, Williams, Albritton, Coleman, Figures, Marsh, Singleton, Orr, Reed, Smitherman, Stutts, Whatley.

The House Judiciary committee has yet to place [HB 447 by Rep. Matt Fridy](#) on its agenda. County officials

and employees are still asked to contact members of this committee and express opposition to this bill. **Please ask committee members not to put this bill on the committee agenda.** The committee members are as follows:

House Judiciary Committee Members: Rep. Jones, Chair; Reps. Hill, J. McClammy, Ball, Beckman, Black, Coleman-Evans, Drake, England, Farley, Faulkner, Fridy, Givan, Pettus, Rowe.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Prison Reform Bill Update

The prison reform legislation could be considered in the House Judiciary committee as early as next week. The Association staff expects that a substitute to the Senate-approved version of the bill will be presented in the House committee. Supporters of the substitute version have stated that the changes are only technical in nature; however, the Association staff will be making a careful review of the substitute bill to ensure it does not contain any new provisions that could adversely impact county governments.

Gun Legislation in House Public Safety Committee Next Week

House efforts to rewrite gun legislation, **HB 47 by Rep. Chris England** and **HB 328 by Rep. Ed Henry**, are scheduled for action in the House Public Safety Committee on next Wednesday at 9:00 a.m. Both bills will be substituted with language developed during the negotiation process. Here is a quick overview of what those substitutes will contain:

HB 47: The new version of this bill should contain changes to code sections on menacing and reckless endangerment; changes related to the presence of guns at demonstrations; changes that make it clear a person can have a gun(s)--that comply with the law otherwise--in a vehicle of a parking deck or lot; changes that attempt to restrict the authority to prohibit guns in medical facilities; and new sections on being in possession of a gun while under the influence of alcohol, along with other new criminal provisions requested by District Attorneys.

HB 328: This NRA-supported legislation should contain changes related to reporting and recording, keeping in several sections of the code, along with changes related to minors being in possession of firearms (including extensive changes to 13A-11-72).

Additional information will be available in the coming days, but **the Association has been told that there are no changes to the pistol permit language in either bill. Clearly, this is good news; however, the Sheriffs and Association staff will continue to work very hard to ensure no additional language is added.**

Much appreciation is extended to Sheriffs for their leadership on this issue!

Solid Waste Bills In Position for Floor Consideration

Please Contact Representatives

The Solid Waste Fee bill **[SB 38 by Sen. Jimmy Holley](#)**, and its companion bill **HB 127 by Rep. Steve Clouse**, are both in position to be considered on the House floor. This bill would make a tremendous difference in many counties by allowing them to use existing solid waste revenues for administrative and program activities related to the solid waste program.

Again, these bills will face opposition from the solid waste industry. This means communication from county officials and employees will play a critical role in moving these bills forward. Please note that the updated summary sheet on SB 38 also explains two amendments that were offered to clarify proper expenditures from the solid waste fees. **County officials and employees are encouraged to contact members of the House to express support for this bill that could make a tremendous difference in many localities.**

Danger Bill in House County & Municipal Govt Committee Next Week

Please Contact Legislators!

DANGER bill [HB 422 by Rep. Rich](#), the companion to SB 394 referenced below, is on next week's House County & Municipal Government committee agenda. This bill would require the county commission to affirmatively approve the transfer of a road to a municipality after the road has been annexed into the corporate limits of the municipality. It is a dangerous step backward for counties since the law now provides that a county road that is annexed into the corporate limits of a municipality automatically becomes the responsibility of the municipality - by operation of law.

STATUS: This bill is on the House County & Municipal Government committee agenda for next Wednesday, April 29 at 1:30 p.m. in Room 123. County officials and employees are urged to contact committee members to express opposition to this bill.

Drag Racing Bill Expected in House Judiciary Next Week

[HB 462 by Rep. AJ McCampbell](#), which would increase the penalties for illegal drag-racing, is currently pending in the House Judiciary committee. Representative McCampbell is working to get this bill on next week's committee agenda, however the schedule has not yet been posted. In the meantime, **county officials and employees are encouraged to call members of the committee to express their support for this bill.**

***Be sure to mention [HB 447 by Rep. Matt Fridy](#), the Probate Judge Pay Raise bill, which is also pending in the House Judiciary committee.

House Judiciary Committee Members: Rep. Jones, Chair; Reps. Hill, J. McClammy, Ball, Beckman, Black, Coleman-Evans, Drake, England, Farley, Faulkner, Fridy, Givan, Pettus, Rowe.

IN THE SENATE

Drag-Racing Bill Received Favorable Committee Report

[SB 321 by Sen. Bobby Singleton](#), the companion bill to HB 462 referenced above, received a favorable report from the Transportation & Energy committee yesterday. Thank you to all the county officials and employees who called Senators about his important public safety bill. **This bill could be considered on the Senate floor as early as next week, so county officials and employees are encouraged to contact all Senators to express support for this bill.**

Please note that DANGER bill [SB 394 by Sen. Ward](#), the companion to **HB 422** referenced above, was also on the T&E committee agenda yesterday, but was carried over.

Senate Bills in Position for Floor Consideration

Please Seek Support from Senators!

The Association staff is also working to get the following bills on the Senate special order calendar. County officials and employees are asked to seek support from Senators on these bills, which could be considered on the Senate floor at any time:

[HB 264 by Rep. Steve McMillian](#) (Local Preferences)

[SB 164 by Sen. Greg Albritton](#) (Amending Local Laws) -- [Click here](#) for a more detailed report on the last action with SB 164.

[HB 193 by Rep. Randy Davis](#) | [SB 16 by Sen. Del Marsh](#) (County Decision-Making).

REMINDERS

The next ACCA Legislative Webinar is scheduled for **Monday, May 18 at 10:30am**. Please click [here](#) to register, and make plans to join the Association staff for the last legislative webinar before the end of the session.

The fifth ACCA County Day is scheduled for Tuesday, April 28 for the following counties: **Autauga, Bullock, Colbert, Covington, Fayette, Greene, Jackson, Lee, Talladega, Washington**. Please email Brandy Perry at bperry@alabamacounties.org to RSVP.

Please don't hesitate to contact a member of the Association staff if you have any questions about this report.

Thanks,

Terri Sharpley Reynolds

Director of Public Affairs

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