

State of Oklahoma
House of Representatives
Weekly Wrap #5
March 7- March 11, 2011

The end of this week found our turnpike skies filled with smoke and the air reminding us of the grass fires that plague Oklahoma when high winds and draught conditions come together. This reminds me of the week behind us – fiery debates and opponents on the opposite sides of legislation all struggling to get enough votes for their bills to get them to the Senate. Despite the Ides of March looming midweek, I'm hopeful that this week – one of our most important deadlines to get House bills off the House floor - will result in level headed discussion and an eye toward passing legislation that will make Oklahoma a better place for you to live and work.

Education Issues – Teachers will be at the Capitol for Spring Break!

Many bills this session deal with educators and educational institutions as their profession is the focal point of many pieces of legislation. Bills range from removing the right of trial de nova, once a critical component of Governor Henry Bellmon's 1017 education reform initiative, to changing pension plans, and how we fund schools. I believe that thoughtful change in our schools, with a community committed to making a public education a priority, is welcome and healthy. My hope is that teachers, school administrators and school boards will work together. We shouldn't leave any of these key voices behind. We must be partners to realize the best outcomes.

Floor Calendar - Please use this link if you want to listen or see where we are each day.
<http://www.okhouse.gov/FloorAgenda/Default.aspx>

Headed to the Senate and Key Bills to watch:

HB2139, authored by Speakers Steele, will significantly change the role of the State Board of Education in order to transfer these powers to the Superintendent of Public Instruction.

HB1381, Rep. Doug Cox, creates a fund that would allow hospitals to pay a 2% assessment on their net patient revenues into a fund that would be used to get more federal dollars to be used for Medicaid match. The annual assessment would end July 2014 or if the federal match goes away. This was supported by the Oklahoma Hospital Association.

HB1555 which will provide an alternative sentencing venue for veterans convicted of a crime, particularly those diagnosed with post-traumatic stress disorder and /or Traumatic Brain Injury.

HB2136 will increase the safeguards for children by requiring the Oklahoma Department of Human Services to conduct criminal background checks on all adults living in a home before a foster child is reunited with a parent.

HB1211 – seeks to strengthen the penalties for social hosts who knowingly and willingly permit individuals younger than 21 years of age to consume alcohol during social events taking place on their premises.

HB1461 – School Bullying Prevention Act – adds violent assault and battery, homicide and suicide to the list of behaviors that can be linked to bullying. It also addresses cyber bullying, which has increased with the growth of social media.

HB1446, by Rep. Faught deals with Immigration issues. This bill would give federally trained state and local law enforcement officials more authority to check the immigration status of motorists. This bill will change before the end of session. There is a Joint Immigration Task Force with the Senate and House which will be issuing a report. This is not an outgrowth from the Task Force.

HB1652, by Rep. Enns – Allows persons with a valid carry concealed license to store a weapon in their vehicle on technology center property.

Additionally, the following bills of interest passed off their respective floors this week:

-SB 143 by Sen. John Ford, requires that a person aged 18 years or younger can only receive a driver's license if he or she is enrolled in a public or private school, including any technology center; has received a diploma or certification of completion issued to the person from a secondary school; or is enrolled and making satisfactory progress in a program leading to a certificate of high school equivalency issued by the State Department of Education.

-SB 392 by Sen. Clark Jolley, allows a credit with respect to the fee for registration of a vehicle which is a replacement for a vehicle which was destroyed by a flood on June 14, 2010.

-SB 483 by Sen. Brian Crain, states legislative intent for state agencies to utilize private service providers whenever feasible to carry out statutory duties in order to increase efficiency and minimize administrative costs.

-SB 571 by Sen. Clark Jolley, allows the state to sell property that is customarily sold on a recognized market or a type which is subject to widely distributed standard price quotations, and it allows the state treasurer to sell the property without notice by publication.

-HB 1232 by Rep. Ben Sherrer, allows for temporary emergency highway closings for flooding by the Oklahoma Department of Transportation.

-HB 1251 by Rep. Wade Rousselot, prohibits the Grand River Dam Authority from selling water from portions of the Grand River and its tributaries downstream from the southern edge of the Markham Ferry Dam on Lake Hudson.

-HB 1355 by Rep. Al McAffrey, changes reference from the individual responsible to bury the body of a deceased person to the person with the right to control the disposition and arrangements for funeral goods and services.

-HB 1339 by Rep. Brian Renegar, requires game and fish license dealers to issue every license via an electronic point of sale system.

-HB 1373 by Rep. Corey Holland, increases penalties for a parent, guardian, custodian, child or other person who fails to compel a child to attend school.

-HB 1380 by Rep. Corey Holland, removes language regarding career teacher pretermination hearings conducted by district boards of education.

-HB 1452 by Rep. Cory Williams, allows a person who was arrested and no charges of any type are filed or charges are dismissed within two years of the arrest to seek an expungement.

-HB 1486 by Rep. Richard Morrisette, creates the Oklahoma Woody Biomass Initiative Act.

-HB 1554 by Rep. Sally Kern, creates the Oklahoma Options Counseling for Long term Care Program Act.

-HB 1666 by Rep. Leslie Osborn, requires the cost associated with signage related to the naming of highways and bridges on the state highway system be paid by the group sponsoring or requesting the sign.

-SB 189 by Sen. Cliff Aldridge, limits the amount of damages someone may recover in a civil action arising out of a vehicle accident to the amount of medical costs, property damage and lost income if the plaintiff or claimant is not in compliance with the Compulsory Insurance Law.

-SB 547 by Sen. Anthony Sykes, prohibits inclusion of elective abortion coverage in any health insurance policy offered by the state's health exchange.

-SB 138 by Sen. Roger Ballenger, directs the Department of Public Safety to make space available on the front or back of a driver license and identification card for a flag emblem to serve as a notation of veteran status.

-SB 266 by Sen. Cliff Aldridge, allows municipalities to adopt ordinances, resolutions or regulations for the implementation and collection of facilities fees to fund or recover their costs for capital improvements.

-SB 290 by Sen. Brian Crain, creates the Oklahoma Police Pension and Retirement System Reform Act of 2011.

-SB 292 by Sen. Brian Crain, creates the Oklahoma Firefighters Pension and Retirement System Reform Act of 2011.

-SB 294 by Sen. Brian Crain, creates the Oklahoma Law Enforcement Retirement System Reform Act of 2011.

-SB 305 by Sen. Brian Crain, creates the Oklahoma Public Employees Retirement System Reform Act of 2011.

-SB 308 by Sen. Brian Crain, creates the Teachers' Retirement System of Oklahoma Reform Act of 2011.

-SB 310 by Sen. Brian Crain, creates the Uniform Retirement System for Justices and Judges Reform Act of 2011.

-SB 558 by Sen. Steve Russell, prohibits employers from forcing any employee who is retired from a branch of the U.S. Military and has been provided with health coverage through a federal plan to participate in employer-sponsored health insurance coverage.

-SB 668 by Sen. Kim David, expands the definition of co-occurring disorder in the Licensed Alcohol and Drug Counselors Act.

-SB 742 by Sen. Don Barrington, prohibits golf carts and utility vehicles to be operated on the streets and highways of Oklahoma.

-SB 782 by Sen. Mike Mazzei, allows the legislative actuary until the end of the year to complete actuarial investigation of a retirement bill having a fiscal impact.

-SB 794 by Sen. Mike Mazzei, modifies contribution rates and retirement benefits for elected officials participating in the Oklahoma Public Employees Retirement System.

-SJR 15 by Sen. Rob Johnson, proposes a constitutional amendment stating that the state shall grant no preferential treatment to or discriminate against any individual or group on the basis of race, color, sex ethnicity or national origin in the operation of public employment, public education or public contract.

-SB 1 by Sen. John Ford, removes language concerning pre-termination hearings for career teachers.

-SB 534 by Sen. John Ford, allows a career teacher to be dismissed or not reemployed for the commission of an act of moral turpitude and provides examples of moral turpitude.

-SB 327 by Sen. Rob Johnson, directs elections for county sheriff to be conducted on a nonpartisan basis.

-SJR 36 by Sen. Clark Jolley, proposes a constitutional amendment eliminating the responsibility of the Judicial Nominating Commission to recommend three individuals to the governor to fill judicial vacancies and authorizes the governor to appoint a nominee to fill the vacancy.

-SB 658 by Sen. Clark Jolley, creates a joint legislative task force to study and identify amendments and modifications to laws relating to low-point and high-point beer and wine sold in grocery stores.

- SB 22 by Sen. Don Barrington, requires judicial officers whose names are to appear on a general election ballot to make their written rulings and opinions available to the public for at least 60 days before the date of the election.
- SB 94 by Sen. Roger Ballenger, exempts from annual hunting and fishing license requirements any legal resident who as a firefighter or law enforcement officer suffered a 60 percent or more disability in the line of duty.
- SB 443 by Sen. Andrew Rice, adds language concerning bicycle and motorcycle safety to the knowledge of traffic laws portion of the examination for Class A, B, C or D driver's licenses.
- SB 606 by Sen. Steve Russell, requires the Governor to appoint any executive director or primary executive position of an agency, subject to Senate confirmation.
- SB 674 by Sen. Clark Jolley, defines an adult as an individual 18 years or older.
- SB 856 by Sen. Steve Russell, states that any person who knowingly solicits, persuades, encourages or entices a licensed dealer or private seller of firearms or ammunition under circumstances which the person knows would violate the laws of Oklahoma or the United States or who provides materially false information with the intent to deceive the dealer or seller about the legality of a transfer is guilty of a felony.
- SB 858 by Sen. Steve Russell, prohibits a health care practitioner from refusing to treat or accept a referral for treatment of a patient based on the lawful ownership or other legal conduct involving firearms by the patient or a member of the patient's household.
- HB 1008 by Rep. Skye McNeil, places a Jan. 1, 2015, end date on tax credits for tuition reimbursed from a qualified aerospace employer to a qualified employee.
- HB 1888 by Rep. Pam Peterson, creates the Pain-Capable Unborn Child Protection Act.
- HB 1648 by Rep. Tom Newell, removes language that allows a member of the Teachers' Retirement System who is absent from teaching service because of an election or appointment as a local, state or national education association officer to be allowed to retain his or her membership in the system upon payment of a contribution.
- HB 1438 by Rep. T.W. Shannon, establishes the Oklahoma State Government Asset Reduction and Cost Savings Program.
- HB 1664 by Rep. Leslie Osborn, removes language requiring the ballot title of an initiative petition to the Legislature to be written on the eighth grade reading comprehension level.
- HB 1665 by Rep. Leslie Osborn, prohibits state agencies from allocating 1.5 percent of their budgets to fund the Oklahoma Art in Public Places Act.
- SB 162 by Sen. Ron Justice, allows retired district attorneys who have verified their status as a former district attorney to carry firearms anywhere in the state.
- SB 132 by Sen. Ron Justice, states that retirement benefits received by an individual from the Armed Forces that do not exceed 100 percent of the benefits or \$12,000 will be exempt from income taxes beginning in tax year 2016.
- SB 878 by Sen. Anthony Sykes, creates the Workers'