

4/26/05

VPA LEGISLATIVE REPORT #14

Bill Signed by Governor; S. 63 Transferring certain functions from Labor & Industry to Dept of Public Service.

New Bills:

Only three new bills appeared on the Legislative Council Web site since last week. One of these, S.171 is the Senate Ag Committee's companion bill to H.527, the House **Agriculture Committee's Water Quality Bill** (see Legislative report #13)

Of note from the House Journal for Tuesday April 26th :

H.243 Carbon monoxide detectors in housing - the House concurred with the Senate's proposals of amendment and added a further amendment.

H. 518, the Capital Construction Bill - the Senate's proposal of amendment was not agreed to and thus a conference committee was formed.

Of note in the Senate Calendar for Wednesday April 27th :

S. 52 Renewable Energy Portfolio Standards, which passed the house with amendments last week, is on the action calendar.

H.28, the Outdoor Lighting Bill is on the calendar but action is postponed to May 4th

On the Notice Calendar - Senate proposals of amendment to H.523, the Transportation (T) Bill.

Selected Committee Agenda items:

SENATE NATURAL RESOURCES & ENERGY COMMITTEE

Wednesday, April 27, 2005

10:30 AM **S.142 – Act 250 Ag Lands Mitigation - Summer study amendment – Al Boright, Leg Counsel**

SENATE GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS COMMITTEE

Wednesday, April 27, 2005

4:30 – 6:30 p.m. Room 10 **Public Hearing – Non-Profit Housing Delivery- ICF Management Review**

SENATE FINANCE COMMITTEE

Thursday April 28, 2005 2:30 p.m. **H.521 Tax Policy Amendments:**

Please contact the Committee if you would like to testify

Jamie Feehan, Lobbyist, Certified Public Accountants (Section 4 Net Operating Loss Study)

Sarah Carpenter, Director, Vermont Housing Finance Agency (Section 6 Methodology for Assessing Affordable Residential Property; Section 7 Affordable Housing Tax Credit; Section 11 Effective Dates - VHFA Sunset))

Andy Broderick, Housing Vermont (Section 7 Affordable Housing Tax Credit)

Bob Stannard, Lobbyist, Town of Manchester (Section 9, 10 Local Option Taxes)

Jim Harrison, Vermont Grocers Association (Section 9, 10 Local Option Taxes)

Steve Jeffrey, Director, Vermont League of Cities and Towns (Section 9, 10 Local Option Taxes)

And this legislative news today from Joss Besse at the VT Downtown Program;

H.360 -- The tax credit bill, merging the existing 5 downtown/village tax credits into 3, simplifying them, and allowing refundable credits in place of the mortgage credit certificates, is still in House Ways and Means. The key issue has been the refundable credit concept, and we've heard today that key committee members who had concerns with this are now more receptive. So we may get the refundability for at least the code-related credit (elevators, sprinklers, electric, ADA, other code work), less likely for the facade and RITC-related credit. I'm hearing that they may also go for raising the cap from \$1m to \$1.5m. The chairman's plan is to wait until the Economic Tax Credit Bill comes over from the Senate, then attach the downtown tax credit bill to it and work out things in a conference committee, meaning that the bill will never actually run through the senate committees and go through a floor vote there on its own. Because the Economic Tax Bill is pretty likely to pass, this could help our own bill.

All in all, things look pretty positive - at least for today one can never tell until a bill is actually signed by the Governor

H.210 -- this miscellaneous tax bill included a substantial change to the sales tax reallocation program. The paperwork under the old system was daunting for both the developer and the Tax Department - with the developer having to provide invoices for all building materials purchased. Under H.210, state reallocations to be made based on the estimates provided in the contractor's bid for a project rather than invoices and other documentation. Effective date is July 1, 2005. The bill has passed both house and senate, and is waiting the Governor's signature, so it is pretty much a done deal.

We will have to revise the application guidelines, and would expect to see much more activity under this program now that it is so much easier to use

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