



Week 5 - Legislative Update

Financial Reporting Passes Appropriations Committee

The House Appropriations Committee passed [CS/HB 1019 \(La Rosa\)](#) which amends existing financial reporting requirements and adds additional financial reporting requirements. The bill changes the deadline for submitting annual financial reports and audit reports from nine to six months after the end of the fiscal year. The bill requires all municipalities to conduct an annual audit and requires municipalities to submit certain budget information to the Office of Economic and Demographic Research and the county clerk of the court. If a municipality fails to file the required reports then the clerk must notify the appropriate fiscal officer to withhold salary payments from the head of the local government entity.

Budget Bills Clear Both Chambers, Negotiations to Commence

This week the House and Senate both advanced separate versions of an over \$87 million state budget, with the two chambers taking different courses on health-care spending and a plan to link education policy to the budget process. After initial debate on the bills, the Senate pass its \$87.3 billion bill and the House passed its \$87.2 billion spending plan. The Revenue Estimating Conference meets today (Friday, February 9) to do one final general revenue estimate and then the chambers will be able to begin negotiating the 2018-2019 state budget.

Impact Fees

[CS/SB 324 \(Young\)](#) and [CS/CS/HB 697 \(Miller\)](#) have ballooned from a pair of bills that simply affected the timing of when local governments could collect impact fees to now encompassing several growth management regulations. This week, House Government Accountability Committee made additional changes to CS/CS/HB 324 by addressing local government concerns exempting water and sewer connection fees from the impact fee provisions of the bills. The legislation prohibit local governments from collecting impact fees prior to the issuance a building permit for the property that is subject to the fee. In addition, the dual rational nexus test (a legal standard impact fees must meet) is codified in the bills. The legislation prohibits the use of impact fee revenues to pay existing debt or for prior approved projects, unless the expenditure is reasonably connected to, or has a rational nexus with, the increased impact generated by the new residential or commercial construction. Amendments also revised the

“sector plan” laws for large developments of more than 15,000 acres by prohibiting a local government requiring a developer to contribute or pay for land acquisition or construction or expansion of public facilities unless the local government has enacted an ordinance that requires developers of other developments not within the sector planning area to do the same.

Wastewater Utility Incentive Bill Clears First Senate Committee

[CS/HB 837 \(Edwards-Walpole\)](#) and [CS/SB244 \(Brandes\)](#) establish a statewide voluntary program for wastewater treatment system assessments, investments, rehabilitation, and electric power outage mitigation planning. The bills provide regulatory incentives for utilities to implement the program. CS/SB 244 passed the Senate Environmental Preservation Committee this week, but has three more committees stops ahead. CS/HB 837 has two more committee stops in the House. The League supports the bills.

Statewide Travel Reporting Moving

Along with of budget conforming and implementing bills, the House passed [HB 5203 \(Government Operations and Technology Appropriations Subcommittee\)](#) which appropriated funds and outline the procedure for the Statewide Travel System which already passed the House in CS/HB 11 (Metz). The Statewide Travel System requires most governmental entities including municipalities, to report information relating to all travel resulting in an overnight stay by a public officer or employee.

Scaled Down Travel Restriction Bill Clears Second House Committee; Senate Bill Up Next Week

[CS/CS/HB 815 \(Avila\)](#) and [SB 1180 \(Steube\)](#) as originally filed would have imposed significant limitations, reporting requirements and prohibitions on local government officer and employee travel. CS/HB 815 was amended in its initial committee and was amended again this week to remove most of the restrictions in the original bill. As amended, the remaining provisions: prohibit reimbursement for foreign travel by elected officials; require out-of-state travel by elected officials be approved in advance by the governing body at a regularly scheduled public meeting (allowing for ratification post-travel upon showing of good cause); require posting of travel by elected officials on government’s webpage for specified timeframe rather than sending to Commission on Ethics; and require incumbent local government candidates to post campaign finance reports on qualifying officer’s website instead of the local government’s website. The amended bill removes provisions requiring Form 6 financial disclosure, provisions restricting travel reimbursement to 24-hour period before and after travel event, provisions imposing a \$120 cap on lodging; and provisions applying these new requirements to public employees.

Towing Bills Keep Moving

Both towing preemption bills, [SB 1632 \(Mayfield\)](#) and [HB 963 \(Cortes\)](#), moved this week. The bills prohibit franchise agreements between tow truck companies and cities if the agreement requires any payment by the tow truck company to the city.

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