



WEEKLY LEGISLATIVE REPORT

A Publication for all City Officials

NOTE: Please copy and distribute to all interested city officials or department heads. File each weeks copy because updates will contain only those bills introduced during the week.

Action In Both Houses Slow But Several Key Municipal Bills Introduced

Day of Session:	16
Days Remaining:	44
Municipal Bills:	269
Total Bills Introduced:	1,141

HB 4119 relates to zoning ordinances. The bill would allow voters to petition to resubmit enacted zoning ordinances for voter approval or rejection two years after their original enactment with voter approval. This bill would also require voter approval for county commission enacted zoning ordinance amendments, and would lower the voter signature percentage requirements needed for petitions. Current law allows referendum by petition. The League will seek to have municipalities removed from the legislation. The bill is before House Political Subdivisions with a second reference to House Judiciary.

HB 4077 authorizes municipalities to provide administrative procedures for the assessment and collection of delinquent municipal fees, with the right to appeal to circuit court. This bill is recommended by the Joint Standing Committee on Government Organization for passage during the 2008 Regular Session. The bill is before House Government Organization with a second reference to House Finance.

Additionally, a similar bill, **HB 4156** permits the governing body of a municipality to place a lien on property in an amount equal to the demolition and removal of a hazardous structure. The bill is before House Political Subdivisions. *[Both HB 4156 & 4077 were subjects of discussion during interim meetings.]*

HB 4165 permits qualified volunteer firefighters to be covered by the state's public health insurance plan. The bill also adds "volunteer firefighter" to the definition of employee and "volunteer fire company" to the definition of employer, and permits the payment of the employer's portion of the costs relating to the plan to be paid from funds available to volunteer fire companies. The bill is before House Banking and Insurance, with a second reference to House Finance.

HB 4145 establishes the West Virginia Convention and Visitors Bureau Accreditation Board, establishes its du-

ties and responsibilities, and requires accreditation standards for convention and visitors bureaus operating in this state. The bill is before House Government Organization.

SB 342 originated in Senate Government Organization this week and relates to regulating the time to sell alcohol in private clubs; exempts race tracks from the private club requirements; and authorizes certain counties and municipalities to designate an earlier time by ordinance. The bill is before Senate Judiciary.

SB 333 was introduced on Thursday, regarding Municipal Home Rule. The bill changes the composition of the Municipal Home Rule Board and changes the timetable and responsibilities for the Municipal Home Rule Pilot Program. The bill is before Senate Government Organization Committee. *[HB 4060 previewed last week relating to Home Rule, is pending before House Judiciary]*

HB 4137 clarifies that a municipality and county will be notified by an insurance company when a total loss to a structure occurs within that county or municipality.

SB 280 would modify the Downtown Redevelopment Act in order to promote development of municipal areas which are unusable without extraordinary expenditures. The bill is before Senate Economic Development, with a second reference to Senate Finance.

SB 117 creates the Small Tourism Business Development Act. The bill would create a tax incentive for the creation, construction or enlargement of tourism attractions or amenities. The credit operates to allow the taxpayer to recover up to 25% or, in the case of bed and breakfast facilities, 50%, of qualified investment in a tourism attraction or amenity by offsetting up to 80% of consumers sales and service tax collected by the taxpayer from customers over a period of either five or ten years at the election of the taxpayer.

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