

Legislative Update for the week ending 02/12/2016

We have now passed the halfway point through the regularly scheduled legislative session. At the beginning of the session Senate staffers were predicting that the session would end on time. This was based upon the need for Senate members to get home and campaign for their seats. While the legislature is in session, legislators are not allowed to do fundraising and because the legislators are in Tallahassee they are not able to go out and campaign in their districts. With a new redistricting map recently approved for the Senate (finally), every Senate seat is up for re-election. Meanwhile any potential challengers who are not currently in the Senate are free to fundraise and be seen by voters back at home. A sense of urgency is felt by Senators. Stay tuned, we will see if the legislative work can be wrapped up on time.

Committee meetings of interest to the membership that took place this week:

Senate Community Affairs Committee
Senate Transportation Committee
House Transportation and Economic Development Appropriations Subcommittee
Senate Transportation, Tourism and Economic Development Appropriations Subcommittee

Meetings of interest next week:

House Transportation and Economic Development Appropriations Subcommittee
House Appropriations Committee
Senate Community Affairs Committee
Senate Transportation Committee
Senate Transportation, Tourism and Economic Development Appropriations Subcommittee

Legislation that is of interest to the membership:

Updates are shown in Red

HB 7081 – Issuance of Specialty License Plates (Stuebe). This bill addresses the number of specialty plates available in Florida. Currently there are over 120 specialty plates and the legislature agreed to moratorium on new specialty plates. The moratorium ends July 1st of this year. In the legislature currently are approximately 30 new specialty plates proposed. Law enforcement sometimes has a hard time determining if a plate is a Florida specialty plate or a plate from another state. Currently DHSMV must discontinue the issuance of an approved specialty license plate if the number of valid specialty plate registrations falls below 1,000 plates for at least 12 consecutive months. This bill will require the minimum number of active

specialty plates required to maintain the specialty plate to go from 1000 to 4000. This would take effect on July 1, 2018.

SB 168 – Traffic Infraction Detectors (Brandes). This bill could be re-named the “no more red light cameras bill”. I believe this summarizes the intent of the bill and the bill narrowly passed out of the Transportation Committee after much debate. The Transportation Committee Chair (Brandes) is a strong opponent of red light cameras and he is pushing this bill forward. The next stop for this bill is the Senate Transportation, Tourism and Economic Development Appropriations Subcommittee. **Committee Substitute – read 1st time**

SB 1372 – Transportation (Flores) – Companion Bill HB1377. This bill contains the provision for Transportation Reinvestment Zones (TRZs). The bill was a late introduction and therefore does not have an analysis. A further read of the bill illuminated a 50% reduction in TRIP funds. The bill has been referred to committees but has not been called by any of the committees. This bill appears to be stalled and is not likely to make it out of the committees. The companion bill is not identical and does not contain a decrease in TRIP funding or the provision for TRZs.

No Change. See HB 1377 Below.

HB 1377 – Expressway Authorities (Nunez) – Companion Bill SB1372. This bill is the companion bill to SB 1372 however the two bills are not identical and really aren't that similar. Senate and House staff have linked the two bills, but they only share a few similarities. At the first committee stop, staff temporarily postponed this bill. It appears stalled for now.

This bill had a strikethrough and rewrite. The strikethrough has been TP'ed (temporarily postponed) in two committees and like the Senate companion bill, this bill looks to be stalled.

HB 357 – Traffic Safety (Plasencia) – Companion Bill SB522. Called Chloe's Law. This bill requires Florida DOT to install roadside barriers to shield water bodies contiguous with state roads anywhere there has been a motor vehicle crash that resulted in a drowning death in the past 10 years. The law does provide that the chief engineer can decide to not construct a barrier if the barrier itself will create a greater danger by its presence. The bill also requires DOT to conduct a study related to motor vehicle accidents on state roads contiguous with water bodies and requires DOT to submit the report to Legislature. The bill passed through the Highways and Waterways Safety Subcommittee, it is now in the Transportation and Economic Development Appropriations Subcommittee. It does not appear to have opposition but has undergone some technical and operational amendments. **No Change**

SB 756 – Transportation (Brandes) – This is the FDOT bill and it contains a number of provisions. The bill creates the FDOT Financing Corporation, transfers the Pinellas Bayway System to the Turnpike, increases the funding for the Florida Seaport Transportation and Economic Development Program from \$15M to \$25M, establishes Florida DOT as the lead agency for the NEPA process on highway projects and revises airport zoning regulations. This bill has passed out of committees without a single dissenting vote and is now on the Senate Floor. **This bill was set for a 2nd reading in the Senate and was Temporarily Postponed.**

SB 7000 – Developments of Regional Impact (Community Affairs general bill) – This bill would increase the acreage for annexation of “enclaves” from 10 acres to 150 acres. An enclave is any unincorporated improved or developed area lying within a single municipality, or surrounded by a single municipality and a manmade or natural obstacle that permits traffic to enter only through the municipality. This bill has passed out of two committees and is now in the Fiscal Policy Committee. **The Fiscal Policy Committee Substitute went through 1st reading in the Senate.**

SB 786 – Electric Vehicles (Sachs) – This bill gives a tax exemption for electric vehicles and would require a study of a mileage based user tax. The bill has not been heard in any committee and appears to be stalled. A similar bill is in the House (HB661), it also has not been heard in any committee and appears to be stalled. **No Change.**

SB 416 – Location of Utilities (Flores) – This bill would require a state or local government to bear the responsibility for the cost of relocating utility facilities in public easement if there is not an agreement to the contrary. This bill has passed out of committees and is headed to the Senate floor. **The Bill passed the Senate (34-4) and an identical bill in the House is through two committees.**

SB 1392 – Transportation (Brandes) – This bill would require traffic control devices in school zones that do not conform to the MUTCD (Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices) be removed by Florida DOT. Also makes a number of changes specific to the operation and regulation of autonomous vehicles. One provision requires MPOs to accommodate advances in vehicle technology when developing LRTPs. The bill also raises the population cap for the Small County Outreach Program from 150,000 to 170,000. The population would allow Charlotte, Martin and Santa Rosa counties to be eligible for the SCOP program, under current population limits they are not eligible. The bill passed out of the Transportation Committee and is now in Senate Transportation, Tourism and Economic Development Appropriations Subcommittee **and is on the 02/17/2016 agenda.**