

Protecting Your Interests

May 14, 2018

In order to be responsive to the latest legislative developments, MOCPA continually monitors proposed legislation. The society utilizes both professional and grassroots lobbyists to ensure the CPA profession has a voice in Jefferson City. By keeping members informed, MOCPA is empowering you to contribute to the legislative process.

Update provided by Chuck Pierce, CPA, MOCPA government relations consultant

Session Update

The Legislature spent the first part of last week working on the budget. Both chambers finished the week dealing with the controversial issue of right to work. This is the last week of the regular session, and it has the potential be very tense.

The Missouri Constitution required the budget to be completed by Friday, May 11. The Legislature comfortably met that deadline and finished the budget on Wednesday. It was completed without much controversy as the House and Senate amicably worked out their differences in conference. The legislative budget did not reflect Governor Greiten's recommended cuts to higher education. Elementary and secondary education funding was also spared cuts as the Legislature agreed to fully fund the education formula. The budget is also the first in many years to include at least a small pay increase for state employees.

Right to work is one of the most controversial issues in the Capitol. Last session, lawmakers passed legislation making Missouri a right-to-work state. Opponents of the measure circulated a petition to place the measure before the voters in a recall election. Recently, the petitions were submitted with enough signatures to qualify it for the ballot. The Legislature took up measures last week that could impact this process.

When the petition to repeal right to work was submitted, it was assumed it would be on the ballot in November. However, the Legislature has the power to set a different election date. The arguments over whether this should be on the ballot in November or August split generally along party lines. The repeal is heavily supported by labor unions, which have traditionally been Democrat leaning voters. For this reason, many believe having the measure on the November ballot will increase turnout and help Democrat candidates in November.

Thursday afternoon, the Senate began debate on a measure that would move to place the issue on the August primary ballot. The debate immediately split along party lines, and Democrat senators began a filibuster. After debating all night, the measure came to a vote around 5 a.m. Friday. The legislation passed on a party line vote. The resolution now must be voted on by the House. Because

Republicans have an overwhelming majority in the House and there is no provision for a filibuster, its passage is likely.

The other option the Legislature can use to impact the recall petition is to place a competing measure on the ballot. On Friday, the House took up a resolution to place a constitutional amendment on the ballot that would establish right to work. If approved by voters, it would counter the recall initiative. After a heated debate Friday afternoon, the House perfected the resolution on a voice vote. It needs a final roll call vote in the House and then would have to be approved by the Senate. If it comes to the floor of the Senate, it will almost certainly result in a filibuster.

This is the last week of the regular session. The fate of a lot of legislation hinges on the flow of floor activity. In recent years, the Senate has slowed its pace, and in some years has virtually shut down. Going into last week, such a slowdown did not seem likely. The events of Thursday and Friday have changed that outlook. The tension surrounding the right-to-work measure are likely to manifest in a disruption of the pace of legislation in the Senate. Whether that disruption is a slowdown or complete shutdown remains to be seen.

Also impacting the last week of the session is the controversy surrounding the governor. His trial on felony invasion of privacy charges will be held in St. Louis this week. The House Special Committee has scheduled three hearings this week. Unlike previous hearings, these are not closed. The public debate of the committee's work will undoubtedly draw much attention. Furthermore, 30 minutes after the end of the regular session on Friday, the Legislature will convene itself in a special session for purposes of considering impeachment of the governor.

Legislation of Interest

To view the complete list of high-priority bills MOCPA is currently tracking, along with their most recent activity and current status, [click here](#).

As we enter the last week of the session, it becomes very difficult to track the status of legislation. Many of the bills MOCPA has been tracking have passed or have a reasonable chance to pass. Some of these items may not pass on their own but could be amended to other bills.

The following bills MOCPA is tracking have already passed:

[HB 1465](#), modifies various provisions relating to degree offerings at public institutions of higher education;

[HB 1500](#), modifies provisions relating to the practice of cosmetology and barbering;

[HB 1858](#), requires the Department of Revenue to feature a map of all special taxing districts on its website;

[HB 1879](#), changes the laws regarding financial transactions by public entities;

[SB 573](#), modifies several provisions relating to the armed services;

[SB 593](#), enacts provisions relating to financial solvency of insurance companies;

[SB 644](#), creates new provisions relating to unclaimed property;

[SB 768](#), allows telephone companies to select an alternate method of property tax assessment; and

[SB 894](#), establishes a statewide STEM career awareness program and enacts new provisions of law related to computer science.

For Additional Information

There will be an end-of-session *Government Advocacy Update* next Monday, May 21, with follow-up reports being sent on an as-needed basis when special developments occur. If you have any questions on MOCPA's government advocacy efforts, please visit the [Web page](#), or contact [Dena Hull](#) at (800) 264-7966, ext. 105.

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