

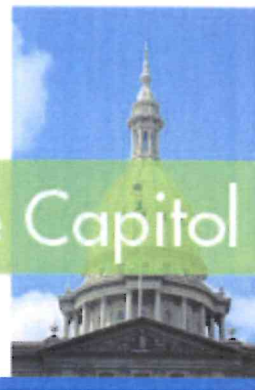
Karen Hill

From: Charlie Glaes
Sent: Monday, July 06, 2015 12:02 PM
To: Karen Hill
Subject: FW: MASB's News From the Capitol

From: Jennifer Smith & Don Wotruba [mailto:MASBgov@masb.org]
Sent: Friday, July 03, 2015 11:13 AM
To: Charlie Glaes
Subject: MASB's News From the Capitol



News From the Capitol



July 3, 2015

- **Early Warning Bills Headed to Governor**
- **Senate Passes Its Road Funding Package**
- **Governor Signs Bills Eliminating February Election Date**
- **MASB Testifies on Physical Presence to Vote Requirement**

Early Warning Bills Headed to Governor

The package of bills to create an early warning system for schools in possible fiscal distress is on its way to the Governor. As reported in the [June 24 edition of *DashBoard*](#), the Senate made substantial changes to the main bill in the package, House Bill 4325, after multiple discussions between MASB, the Department of Treasury and other education organizations.

The Senate gave its final approval to HB4325 on Tuesday. It also passed HB4331-4332, the final bills in the package, which would increase the cap on emergency loans available to schools and municipalities. There are districts in our state in great need of this change and we are pleased with the efforts to get it done before the summer break.

All of the bills are now before the Governor for his consideration and approval. We expect him to sign them into law next week.

Senate Passes Its Road Funding Package

On Wednesday, the Senate narrowly passed its version of a road funding package. It includes a 15-cent gas tax increase over three years and an increase in vehicle registration fees. It also dedicates \$700 million of income tax revenue to road funding starting in 2017 through 2033. This will remove that amount from the state's general fund, most likely leading to cuts in other areas. The package also includes a roll back of the income tax each year that the state's revenue increase is higher than the rate of inflation.

While both the Senate and House versions include some sort of increase in taxes and fees, as well as cuts to the overall state budget, the way each chamber goes about it is different. So the debate will continue over the summer to reach a consensus.

Hopefully, with both chambers having passed their solutions, we can reach a final answer soon. As always, MASB will keep you informed and watch closely to make sure that funding for our schools is not negatively affected by any changes made.

Governor Signs Bills Eliminating February Election Date

The Governor signed [House Bills 4270-4276](#), this week. These bills eliminate the February election date. MASB opposed the bills due to concerns about limiting schools' options when it comes to bonds or millage renewals. However, with the only opposition coming from the school community, the bills passed easily through both the House and the Senate. The bill will eliminate the February date starting in 2016.

MASB Testifies on Physical Presence to Vote Requirement

MASB testified during the Senate Committee on Elections and Government Reform meeting on Tuesday on HB4182. Under the bill, if a person were to participate in a meeting by phone, Skype or some other remote system, they would not be allowed to vote. If they did cast a vote, the meeting would be considered to be a violation of the Open Meetings Act.

In the House, a provision was added so that this only applies to elected boards. We strongly oppose the added language as it would treat similar boards differently. Public school academies would not fall under this bill, neither would many ISDs and it would cover only three universities. If we are going to have a policy on the use of technology to vote, it needs to be applied uniformly.

MASB gave examples from some of our members where allowing this may make sense. We also gave examples of other states that allow remote participation under certain limited circumstances. Some members of the committee seemed to support the idea of not banning it completely, but coming up with a compromise that allows flexibility for boards. We hope to continue to work with the committee over the next couple weeks to make this a more effective and clear policy.

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