



ALLIANCE LEGISLATIVE REPORT (95-23)

ANOTHER WEEK, STILL NO BUDGET

The legislature went through the motions of conducting business this week, but lawmakers have little to show for it. It was another abbreviated work week as both the House of Representatives and Senate each cancelled a day of session. Governor Rod Blagojevich met with the legislative leaders, but the fiscal year 2008 budget was rarely discussed.

House Speaker Michael Madigan and House Minority Leader Tom Cross have both expressed frustration with the “budget meetings”. It seems that crafting a budget agreement – the reason the General Assembly is in overtime – didn’t seem to be the subject of the meetings. Instead of negotiating on a budget resolution, the Governor has been bringing in “guest speakers” to present information on various topics: health insurance, TIF districts, and the Chicago Transit Authority.

The State 2007 fiscal year ends on June 30. A new budget outlining spending priorities and an appropriations bill that gives State agencies authority to spend money need to be adopted for the new fiscal year beginning on July 1. If no budget is in place by the second week of July, State services may be interrupted. State payroll checks, payments for medical providers, and payments to citizens needing State assistance could be delayed.

Though the House approved a budget bill in May, the Senate adopted a resolution Wednesday that states that the measure is inadequate and would not be supported in that chamber. On **Senate Resolution 258 (Trotter, D-Chicago)**, 33 Senators voted to say that they were against the House budget and 19 voted in favor of the House budget. This truly sends lawmakers back to the drawing board. Senate President Emil Jones, Jr. has hinted that the legislature may have to approve a one-month budget that will allow the State to continue operating while budget negotiations proceed.

Both chambers are expected to be back in session next Tuesday.

OTHER LEGISLATIVE ACTION FOR THE WEEK

HB 816 (Coulson) provides that when a child who is eligible for special education reaches the majority age of 18 years, rights accorded to the child's parents transfer to the child. **The bill was approved** by both chambers and will be sent to the Governor for consideration.

SJR 21 (Raoul) proclaims the second Tuesday in September of each year as Kindergarten Day in the State of Illinois. **The resolution was adopted** by both houses.

SJR 26 (Garrett) reconstitutes the Joint Task Force on Deaf and Hard of Hearing Education Options created under House Joint Resolution 43 from last year and requires the Joint Task Force to submit a report to the General Assembly no later than December 31, 2008. **The resolution was adopted** by both houses.