

Legislative Newsletter

March 31, 2017



Second Funnel Passes; Budget Bills Next Up

The second funnel of this legislative session was March 31. This means lawmakers will start focusing on budget targets and wrapping things up in the coming weeks, as committee work is over, except for Ways & Means and Appropriations. We are not sure when the chambers will adjourn for the year, though the Legislature seems eager to aim for just after the Easter Weekend as an end date.

The mental health funding formula bill was released last Monday. Senate Study Bill 1187. This is a funnel-proof Ways & Means bill. A snapshot view:

The statewide \$114 million cap will stay the same and not be lifted. However, the bill removes the county levy caps and creates a regional cap. This effectively allows for levy authority to be distributed as a region needs. The bill gives, in essence, a five-year sunset provision for a workgroup to review. The growth factor in the first two fiscal years is one percent each, followed by two percent for the two subsequent fiscal years after that. Finally, the bill requires counties raising their levy 30 days from the bill's enactment to recertify their budgets (but not if levies stay the same or are lowered).

The Governor also signed some bills before the funnel ended, including the controversial workers compensation (House File 518) and pre-emption (House File 295). We have been

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against the latter, as the matter of minimum wage should be one of local control for counties to determine based on the needs of its populations.

The following bills have made it out of funnel:

- House File 517: Gun omnibus bill. This is currently awaiting debate in the Senate.
- Senate File 431: Wireless siting facilities. Amendments are expected on this bill when it comes to the House floor in the coming weeks.
- House Joint Resolution 1: Search of electronic communications. This unanimously passed the Senate Judiciary Committee and is debate eligible.
- Senate File 489: Fireworks. This was voted out of House Ways & Means last week and is debate eligible in the House.
- Senate File 2: Planned Parenthood. This bill has been in the House awaiting action, however, it is likely to be dealt with in a budget bill as opposed to a policy bill.
- Senate File 438: PLA's. This bill has cleared the House Labor Committee and is debate eligible in the House chamber.
- House File 234: Court reports and mental health advocates. This bill is debate eligible in the Senate, after clearing the Senate Human Resources committee.

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