

Legislative Newsletter

Jan. 22, 2021



Though the week was short due to observance of the Martin Luther King, Jr. holiday on Monday, and the Inauguration of President Biden resulted in a quiet Wednesday at the state Capitol, committee work on bills commenced this week, and the House even had its first floor work (on Chamber rules). Several bills were introduced this week and have had subcommittees or have them scheduled for the week of Jan. 25.

Fireworks are back on the docket. **Senate File 99** would allow a county or city to prohibit the sale of specific kinds of fireworks if there is “clear and convincing” evidence that the firework in question is a danger to public safety or health.

County compensation boards are also back. This seems to be a topic that comes up every session for the last several years. **Senate File 108** would require county compensation boards to consider the economic health of the county when determining compensation schedules in addition to other requirements, and further would require the boards to document the reasons for the recommended compensation schedule.

House Study Bill 93: This is the multi-residential property bill from the Dept. of Revenue. This bill eliminates the property tax classification for multi-residential property as of 2022, when assessments for such property are the same as residential property and includes it as residential property.

House File 93: This bill requires counties to reimburse funeral directors for all costs related to an autopsy or investigation.

Gary Grant, CEO
Cell 319.721.5977
gary@grantconsultingllc.com

Larry Murphy, CFO
Cell 319.361.2834
larry@llmurphy.com

Meghan Malloy, General Counsel
Cell 515.321.5825
meghan@malloyjdlaw.com

L&L Murphy Consulting / Grant Consulting

House File 94: This bill prohibits firing a gun in a car on a highway and sets a scheduled fine of \$30, in addition to any civil penalties.

Senate File 91: This bill would change the closing time for polls to 9 p.m., and increases the time that voters are given to be away from work to vote to three hours.

House Study Bill 93: This bill will eliminate the property tax classification for multi-residential property as of 2022 when assessments for such property are the same as residential property and includes it as residential property.

Land record changes and fees are addressed in **House Study Bills 96 and 97**, respectively. HSB 96 allows county supervisors to amend the County Land Record Information System as needed for the on-going implementation of the system. Defines the system. HSB 97 allows the County Land Record Information System to use any excess fees from collecting documents electronically to pay for processing of documents, redacting personal information and similar uses

Senate File 112: This is the forest and fruit tree exemption. The bill would make the value of forest/fruit tree property tax credit 75 percent of the actual value. The bill requires property to be 10 acres as of 2022 and makes the exemption for five years, and makes the exemption period for current qualifying properties five years after certification unless the property is under 10 acres. The exemption would end for any property that is less than 10 acres next year. Property owners would enter into a deprecation agreement with the Dept. of Natural Resources, which would have required inspections. The DNR will be required to notify the county auditor if a property fails to meet the inspection requirements and ends an existing exemption in the next assessment years if a property fails certification.

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