

Weekly Legislative Briefing 1-17-2021

The legislative session is rolling along but it seems to be at a little slower pace than normal.

This last week there was a hearing on HB 107. This bill would require a 2/3's majority vote on mill levies. The bill had very little support and a significant amount of opposition. The Fire Alliance sent in written testimony opposition to this bill. The committee has yet to act on the bill.

Upcoming items:

SB 80 has a hearing on Wednesday the 20th at 3 P.M. in front of the Senate Local Government Committee. This bill would require that any interlocal agreement can only last for a period of 5 years and would then have to be renewed. The Fire Alliance opposes this bill and help opposing it would be appreciated.

HB 86 is the Fire Authority Bill. This bill allows for multiple fire jurisdictions or any make up, who want to participate in the authority to join up together into a single agency. It does not force anyone to participate and it must be approved by the voters of each district to be enacted. This bill is a product of the Interim Study on Fire and MES Issues from two sessions ago. This bill has a hearing in front of the House Local Government Committee on Thursday the 21st at 3 P.M. The Fire Alliance supports HB86 and would appreciate any support we could get on it.

There are a couple of bills on the watch list that do not have bill numbers attached yet but have draft language:

LC0627: This bill would strengthen the Move over law. The citation for speeding through an emergency zone would move to reckless endangerment of an emergency personnel and it would reduce the speed limit by half of the regularly posted speed limit, or to the temporary speed limit if a sign has been posted. The Fire Alliance will support this bill.

LC0729: This bill would sunset voted on mill levies after 10 years. This could have catastrophic effects on operating budgets. If this bill gets introduced the Fire Alliance will oppose this bill.

With the COVID precautions this session there is the traditional way of testifying, in person or in writing, but testimony can also be done remotely by Zoom. For any that may wish to use this method, you must register 24 hours in advance, or by noon the preceding day.

If you have any questions or concerns, please feel free to reach out!

Rich Cowger