

Montana Legislative update 3-1-2021

Things were hectic last week as there was a rush to get bills heard before transmittal which is this Wednesday. A quick rundown on last week's legislative actions:

SB 178 the bill mandating that the State not-adopt sprinkler codes in single family dwellings has passed the Senate and was transmitted to the house where it will be heard in front of the House Judiciary Committee. It does not have a hearing date as of yet. This bill is progressing despite significant opposition from the fire service. **Standby by for a call to action, this will need very organized and significant opposition in front of the House Judiciary committee if we have any chance of killing this bill this session.**

HB 264, the bill designed to strengthen the Move over Law, was brought off the table last week and with some amendments passed out for the committee unanimously, and passed 2nd reading in the House unanimously. It has one more vote in the House, then it will be transmitted to the Senate. If/ when it gets passed to the Senate it will have another committee hearing in which we will again need support for the Bill.

HB 215 was heard in front of the Senate Judiciary Committee and passed the committee. This Bill now will go to the Senate Floor for a vote, and then probably on to the Governor's desk. This Bill legalizes the sale of Bottle Rockets and Roman Candles within the State.

HB 382 which would limit the use of exploding targets on State Lands during high fire danger times. The Bill passed the House and was transmitted to the Senate, where it will be heard in front of the Senate Judiciary Committee. No hearing date has been set yet.

HB 469 is a Bill that would allow the State to reimburse local government for up to at least 50% for EMAC deployments and then the State would be reimbursed by the requesting State This Bill was heard in the House, passed in 2nd and 3rd readings on the house floor and was transmitted to the Senate.

SB 289 would have removed the check box on applications for a felony conviction. This bill was tabled in committee.

HB421 would have started a retirement system for EMS volunteers by including them in the VFCA and using 911 monies for the contribution. Due to funding issues and not actuarial study done on the retirement system, this Bill was tabled in Committee.

LC's that we are watching:

LC 1127: Was an attempt to resurrect the RFA bill. The sponsors were requested to let us work on it through the next interim.

LC 1945 would provide for an interim study on EMS systems in the State. If this gets a bill number, we will support it, but it has to move quick.

LC 2644 clears up some language in regard to DLI and SFMO/ AHJ's working in cooperation regarding codes. There are some circumstances that may keep this LC from becoming a bill before transmittal.

Any questions feel free to call!

Rich Cowger