

No Budget --- No Projects!

The 2010 Session of the Kentucky General Assembly has come to a close. Unfortunately, the House and Senate were unable to agree on what Kentucky's next two-year budget should look like. For many KRWA members, no budget means no water and sewer projects. The current state budget will end on June 30, 2010; however, it should be noted that both previously passed House and Senate budgets relied on savings by restructuring debt by June 1, meaning the governor will need to call a Special Session in May. Look for this session to be called soon after the primary elections on May 18th. The Senate has indicated they are unwilling to go into Special Session without a budget agreement in advance in an effort to limit the additional daily cost of another session.

Both the House and Senate budgets, passed in their respective chambers, included substantial savings in the area of public health benefits, Medicaid savings and some effort to reduce corrections costs. In the end, both budgets were very close, but the House wanted to fund a number of construction projects by issuing bonds. Arguing that now is the time to issue bonds while interest rates are at an all-time low and construction costs are consistently below engineers estimated costs. Senate members argued that, in these tough times, the state could not afford to go any further into debt.

As we approach a Special Session within the next six weeks, you will need to continue to keep your legislators informed of your project needs. The Kentucky General Assembly has been very good to KRWA's membership in past budgets. Unfortunately, there is still much work to be done in providing the basic necessities of affordable water and wastewater services to the public. Thanks in large part to KRWA members contacting their legislators, we were able to stop or change several pieces of negative legislation this session. Thank you for your continuing support and participation in the democratic process.

Only seven (7) out of thirty-nine (39) bills and resolutions that we were tracking during the 2010 Session passed both the House and Senate. Some bills have already received the signature of the governor, thereby becoming law. The governor still has eight more days to veto bills before things are final, but none of the seven that we were watching seem to be in any jeopardy of the governor's veto pen.

The Bill Tracking sheet has been reduced to the seven successful bills with summaries of their pertinent changes to existing law.

Bill Tracking > > > > > > > > > > > > > > > > > >

Bill/Resolution Title

Bill Number

Sponsor

Votes

State Contracting Practices**SB 45****Gary Tapp, Shelbyville**

Create a new section of KRS Chapter 45A to give preference to KY resident bidders in qualified state construction contracts.

Latest Action: Apr. 15 - delivered to Governor

Passed Senate 38-0
Passed House 98-0

Engineers State Board of Licensure**SB 79****Gary Tapp, Shelbyville**

Amends various sections of KRS Chapter 322 dealing with the licensure of engineers and land surveyors.

Latest Action: Apr. 15 - delivered to Governor

Passed Senate 37-0
Passed House 71-27

Reverse Auctions**SB 176****Vernie McGaha, Russell Springs**

Amend KRS 45A.035 to require the Finance and Administration Cabinet to adopt regulations governing use of reverse auctions, but does not apply to construction projects.

Latest Action: Apr. 6 - signed by Governor

Passed Senate 37-0
Passed House 99-0

Water District Commissioners**HB 201****Eddie Ballard, Madisonville**

Amend KRS 74.020 to allow removal of water district commissioners as prescribed under KRS 74.455; allow the PSC to fill vacancies resulting from death, resignation, or removal of the commissioner; require newly appointed commissioners to have 12 hours of annual training; allow entities other than the PSC to provide training; provide dates certain for completed training and allow for forfeiture of office for failure to complete training; allow commissioners to be reimbursed for training fees from water district budget; prescribe method for reporting vacancies and filling vacancies.

Latest Action: Mar. 18 - signed by Governor

Passed House 99-0
Passed Senate 37-0

Fire Sprinkler Inspectors**HB 220****Brent Yonts, Greenville**

Create new sections of KRS Chapter 198B, relating to annual and renewal certification requirements and fees for fire sprinkler inspectors.

Latest Action: Apr. 12 - signed by Governor

Passed House 99-0
Passed Senate 38-0

Imposition of Liens**HB 454****Rick Rand, Bedford**

Create new sections of KRS Chapter 376 to authorize municipal utilities that provide gas, electric, sewer or water service to retail business customers to impose a lien on their property for any outstanding charges and fees when utility bill is in arrears in excess of \$10,000.

Latest Action: Apr. 15 - delivered to Governor

Passed House 96-0
Passed Senate 36-2

Sanitary Sewer Discharges**HB 504****Kevin Sinnette, Ashland**

Create a new section of subchapter 16 of KRS Chapter 224 to require, to the extent allowable, the Environmental and Public Protection Cabinet to consider affordability, flexibility in implementation schedules, and other factors when issuing wet weather discharge permits under KRS 224.16-050.

Latest Action: Apr. 13 - signed by Governor

Passed House 97-1
Passed Senate 38-0
