

# Government Advocacy Update



Protecting Your Interests

April 24, 2017

*In order to be responsive to the latest legislative developments, MOCPA continually monitors proposed legislation. The society utilizes both professional and grassroots lobbyists to ensure the CPA profession has a voice in Jefferson City. By keeping members informed, MOCPA is empowering you to contribute to the legislative process.*

**Update provided by Chuck Pierce, CPA, MOCPA government relations consultant**

## **Session Update**

Last week, tensions reached the breaking point in the Senate. The House continued to advance its bills to the Senate. MOCPA's priority licensing bills progressed.

The Senate has made a lot of progress this session on some of leadership's longstanding priorities. Getting this done however has taken a lot of floor time in sometimes contentious debate. This began to build up over the last week. On the Thursday before Easter break, the Senate stayed and worked on legislation to establish a prescription drug monitoring system. On a day that most senators expected to start their four-day holiday weekend at mid-afternoon, they found themselves on the floor until 7 p.m. When they returned on Tuesday, they picked up debate on a bill to end the circuit breaker tax credit for renters. This measure is critical to assumptions in the budget, so it must be resolved prior to the May 5 budget deadline. The Senate stayed in session all night. When they finally adjourned at 5 a.m. on Wednesday, they were hopelessly deadlocked on the issue.

These types of long debates without resolution cause tensions to rise. They boiled over in a debate between two senators on Thursday afternoon. The Senate had tentatively planned a Friday session to work on the budget. Instead, they adjourned abruptly on Thursday. Ostensibly to let folks go home for the weekend and cool off. When they return this week, the senators are expected to start working on budget bills on the floor. In a tight budget year, this is not expected to be a pleasant debate.

Tensions in the Senate are also spilling over to the House. The Senate is spending a lot of time on a select few issues and the budget, which means the dozens of ordinary issues that require legislative attention are not getting done. The House on the other hand is moving through these matters. Representatives become frustrated seeing issues of importance to their districts pass the House only to sit on the calendar in the Senate. The response to this frustration has been to pass more House bills, which only adds to the backlog in the Senate. With three weeks to go, there is still time to break this loose and pass these routine matters.

In the list of routine legislative matters is MOCPA's priority legislation to bring Missouri in line with the Uniform Accountancy Act. Both of these bills, [SB 395](#) and [HB 1060](#), had favorable activity last week. **SB 395** was heard by the House General Laws Committee and will hopefully be voted on this week. **HB 1060** was voted do pass by the House Professional Registration Committee. It now goes to the House Rules Committee.

While MOCPA legislation is advancing, it is subject to the collateral damage of the backlog. There is no opposition to these bills, and legislators who are contacted about them indicate support. A critical component to advancing these routine measures will be constituent contact. Legislators will respond best in the final weeks to routine issues if they are important to their constituents. It is imperative that legislators, particularly those in the

House, hear from as many CPAs as possible on these issues. If you have not done so, please contact your state representative and urge them to support **SB 395** and **HB 1060**. For help in looking up your representative and his or her contact information, [click here](#). Please let us know (at [dhull@mocpa.org](mailto:dhull@mocpa.org)) if you reach out to your representative, whether you receive any feedback, or if you need additional information. Thank you in advance for your support and participation!

### **Legislation of Interest**

The following high priority bills MOCPA is tracking had significant activity last week:

[HB 51](#) authorizes county commissions that are trustees for a cemetery trust fund to utilize investment managers to invest, reinvest, and manage fund assets. This bill was passed by the Senate with amendments 32 to 0. It now goes to the House where they will either accept the amendments or go to conference.

[HB 109](#), authorizing an earned income tax credit in Missouri, was voted do pass from the House Committee on Rules-Administrative Oversight. The bill now goes to the full House for a vote.

[HB 547](#), requiring Missouri taxable income rates be adjusted for inflation, was voted do pass from the House Committee on Rules-Administrative Oversight. The bill now goes to the full House for a vote.

[HB 564](#), establishing the Password Privacy Protection Act, was voted do pass from the House Committee on Rules-Administrative Oversight. The bill now goes to the full House for a vote.

[HB 849](#) changes the laws regarding financial transaction reporting so that certain requirements of transportation development districts also apply to political subdivisions. It passed the House 131 to 2.

[SB 16](#), exempting delivery charges from sales and use taxes, was voted do pass from the House Committee on Rules-Administrative Oversight. The bill now goes to the full House for a vote.

[SB 66](#), modifying provisions of law relating to workers' compensation, passed the House with amendments 101 to 46. The Senate will either vote to accept the amendments or go to conference.

### **For Additional Information**

This *Government Advocacy Update* e-newsletter will continue weekly through the legislative session. If you have any questions on MOCPA's government advocacy efforts, please contact [Dena Hull](#) at (800) 264-7966, ext. 105.

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