

Plumbing and Mechanical Association of Georgia

Legislative Report

February 19, 2010

The Georgia General Assembly passed the half-way mark yesterday, and then recessed until March 8. The long recess will give House and Senate leaders much needed time to balance the budget in the face of continued revenue declines. Also, there may be a kernel of hope for an improved revenue projection by the time they reconvene. Committees are expected to continue meeting during the recess.

Panel adopts substitute water bill.

The Senate Natural Resources Committee yesterday approved a substitute version of SB 370, the Governor's water conservation bill. An identical substitute is being considered for HB 1094, the House companion bill. SB 370 and HB 1094 continue to focus on residential and commercial water conservation.

Changes in the substitute bill were largely technical in nature. There were, however, a couple of substantive changes.

One change provides that EPD "Examine the effect that water conservation has on water rates and consider policies to mitigate the financial impact that rate increases or reductions in water use have on water utilities and water users." Another change in the language would require new, multiunit residential buildings to provide for measurement of water use by each unit. The change would also require that the owner or operator of such multiunit residential building bill each unit for its use of water.

Bill status report.

HB 953 – Smith of Newnan: to exempt from sales and use tax certain energy efficient products and water efficient products from October 1 through October 10, 2010. Still in Ways & Means Committee.

HB 998 – Martin of Alpharetta: to repeal the corporate net worth tax. Still in Ways & Means Committee.

HB 1016 – Golick of Smyrna: to include businesses as potential victims of identity theft. Passed House and referred to Senate Judiciary Committee.

HB 1069 – Wilkinson of Dunwoody: would provide tax credits for qualified equipment that reduces business or domestic energy or water use. Still in Ways & Means.

HB 1076 -- Dodson of Clayton County: would repeal provisions relating to the licensing of residential and general contractors. Still in Regulated Industries Committee.

HB 1094 – Smith of Newnan: Administration bill to implement residential and commercial water conservation; to provide for water supply reservoirs. Still in House Natural Resources. Senate companion bill is SB 370.

HB 1173 – Ashe of Atlanta: to change definitions related to local government code enforcement boards. Referred to State Planning & Community Affairs Committee.

HB 1195 – England of Auburn: would stipulate that no building code may require fire sprinklers in single family dwellings. Referred to State Planning & Community Affairs.

HB 1206 – Maddox of Zebulon: would change provisions relating to the requirement for a water well contractor's license and drilling under the direction of a professional geologist or engineer. Referred to Natural Resources Committee.

HR 1293 – Dodson of Clayton County: a resolution calling for a study committee on the licensing of residential and general contractors. Still in Regulated Industries Committee.

SB 148 – Shafer of Duluth: carryover bill from 2009, to provide for review and evaluation of existing occupational regulatory entities. Passed Senate and referred to House Regulated Industries Committee.

SB 321 – Pearson of Dawsonville: to provide for private ownership of new public water supply reservoirs. Favorably reported by Senate Natural Resources Committee.

SB 339 – Seabaugh of Sharpsburg: to make it unlawful to disqualify a licensed utility contractor from doing work on a utility system on the basis that the utility contractor does not hold a general contractor license. Passed Senate and referred to House Regulated Industries Committee.

SB 346 – Rogers of Woodstock: to make comprehensive revisions in property tax law, providing more transparency and equity for property owners. Still in Senate Finance.

SB 362 – Weber of Dunwoody: would amend lien law to eliminate provisions that a mechanic or materialman who has executed a waiver and release upon payment shall be presumed to have received payment if the mechanic or materialman does not file an affidavit of nonpayment within a certain period of time. Still in Special Judiciary.

SB 370 – Tolleson of Perry: Administration bill to implement residential and commercial water conservation; to provide for water supply reservoirs. Favorably reported by Senate Natural Resources. House companion bill HB 1094 is in House Natural Resources.

###