

MCA Summary of Legislation November 2012

2011-12 Session Comes To An End; 2012 Elections Maintain Republican Control of House and Senate

Keeping their word, the House and Senate did not hold any voting sessions after the November 7 elections, allowing any bills not sent to Governor Corbett before they broke to die. Of 4352 bills, and 1338 Resolutions introduced during the two year session, a total of 345 bills managed to find their way to the Governor's desk signature, with two more being vetoed, one each year. Of the 242 bills being tracked for you by your lobbyists, 15 passed finally, most of which we either supported or had amended so that we could take a neutral position.

The upcoming session will look only slightly different from the one that is just ended, in terms of control of the Chambers, and the Leadership teams. After the votes were counted on election night, a total of 29 new House members were elected. The House Republicans lost one incumbent, and will enter the new session with a 111-90 majority. Two vacancies were created by Democrat House members being winning other seats. Rep. Eugene DePasquale (D-York) was elected Auditor General, and Rep. Matt Smith (D-Allegheny) was elected to the state Senate, to succeed the departed Republican John Pippy. Special elections will be held to fill their House seats.

The House Caucuses met to elect their new leaders after the elections, and re-elected the same teams from this past session. Republicans will nominate Rep. Sam Smith (R-Jefferson) for a second term as Speaker, which he will win, and Rep. Mike Turzai (R- Allegheny) was elected to again serve as Majority Leader. Democrats re-elected Frank Dermody (D-Allegheny) to be their floor leader. Committee Chairs will be decided in December, and announced officially in January.

In the Senate, the numbers will be a bit closer than they have been in a decade, as Democrats won three of the four open Senate seats, all previously held by Republicans. This means that the split will now be 27-23 in favor of Republicans, making the Democrats far more influential in the process than they have been for years. Now every Republican is potentially the deciding vote on many issues. Like the House, the Senate Democrats and Republicans re-elected this year's leadership teams for 2013-14. Sen. Joe Scarnati (R-Jefferson) will return as President Pro Tempore, and Sen. Dominic Pileggi (R-Delaware) will serve another term as Majority Leader. Democrats again called on Sen. Jay Costa (D-Allegheny) to lead them on the floor. All four of the 2011-12 Appropriations Chairs in the House and Senate were also re-elected. Other chairs in the Senate will also be appointed in December, with a few key ones possibly changing hands. What does this all mean? It means that by and large you can expect many of the same issues will come back, if they were not passed this session, and handled by mostly the same folks.

Transportation Funding Rumors

Governor Corbett has said publicly that he will address Pennsylvania's transportation funding needs during 2013, but without any detail of how. Rumor has it that the plan will be a multi-billion dollar bond issue (2 to 3 billion supposedly) dedicated to transportation. While nothing is official until the Governor makes it so, there is growing optimism that such a proposal could pass the General Assembly. Of course bonding has its positives and negatives. With interest rates low, the timing of indebtedness is right. But bonding is a onetime event that doesn't create a long-term funding solution. Stay tuned for verification and more details once the plan is made public.

Apprenticeship Council Tables Controversial Ratio Changes

An attempt by non-union contractors and the ABC to lower traditional journeyman to apprentice ratios for construction contractors failed when the PA Department of Labor and Industry's Apprenticeship Council voted to table the requests. The requests were made by about a dozen separate electrical contractors as well

as the ABC on behalf of its electrical workers program. In each case, the request was to lower the ratio to one to one. This effort was seen as the first step in reducing ratios for all construction trades.

Many of the members on the Council were recently appointed by Governor Corbett and there was uncertainty as to whether the traditional ratios would be maintained. It appears that the Administration urged the Council to table the requests in order to gather more data. A number of the members of the Council that voted against tabling the requests are thought to have done so because they oppose the changes and would rather have defeated the effort immediately. The Council can consider the ratio changes again at any future meeting.

Legislative Activity

No bills of interest to the construction industry were acted on by the General Assembly in November. The session ended officially at midnight on November 30. The 2013-14 session begins on January 1.

Upcoming meetings of Interest

2013 HOUSE SESSION SCHEDULE

January	1, 14, 15, 16, 22, 23
February	4, 5, 6, 11, 12, 13
March	11, 12, 13, 18, 19, 20
April	8, 9, 10, 15, 16, 17, 22, 23, 24
May	6, 7, 8, 13, 14, 15
June	3, 4, 5, 10, 11, 12, 17, 18, 19, 20, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28

2013 SENATE SESSION SCHEDULE

January	1, 22, 23, 28, 29, 30
February	4, 5, 6, 11, 12, 13
March	11, 12, 13, 18, 19, 20
April	8, 9, 10, 15, 16, 17, 29, 30
May	1, 6, 7, 8, 9, 13, 14
June	3, 4, 5, 10, 11, 12, 17, 18, 19, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28

Copies of all bills of interest can be accessed via the Internet at:

<http://www.legis.state.pa.us/WU01/LI/BI/billroom.htm>