

KRTA LEGISLATIVE UPDATE 04 – 2012 GENERAL ASSEMBLY

Jan. 27, 2012

At the national level, a disparaging political catchphrase has become popular – “the party of ‘NO’.” It is being used by one political party to describe the other party’s approach to governing. In Kentucky, where political one-upsmanship is infinitely more interesting and highly developed than at the federal level, we have implemented a bi-partisan approach to this concept.

This week redistricting continued to dominate much of the discussion. Yesterday, House Republicans filed suit in Franklin County Circuit Court to overturn the House redistricting plan approved by both chambers and signed by the governor. It has been suggested that a similar suit by Senate Democrats may be filed in the near future.

The House and Senate conference committee is still working on an agreement on redrawing Congressional districts. At this point, no agreement has been reached.

The House Appropriations & Revenue Committee heard details on of the governor’s \$19.4B Executive Branch Budget plan for 2012-14 (HB 265) on Tuesday of this week. The plan includes \$815M in new spending along with spending cuts and other measures to fill a projected \$742M budget gap over the next two fiscal years.

The House Appropriations & Revenue Committee and its subcommittees will hold more discussion on the 2012-14 biennial budget (HB 265) in the coming days and weeks. Legislative action in both the House and Senate involved a number of bills, including bills to create an adult abuse registry and reduce abortions in Kentucky.

HB 265 (the budget bill) still contains the funding necessary for the state to meet its “Shared Responsibility” obligation to the KTRS Medical Insurance fund and the employer match for active teachers to the KTRS Pension fund.

HB 300 (Retirement) was filed this week by Rep. Mike Cherry (D, Princeton). This bill pertains to KTRS in that it sets term limits for KTRS Board of Trustee members of three consecutive terms. It also calls for the trustees to be subject to the executive branch code of ethics and restricts the use of placement agents.

KTRS already has a strong code of ethics in place for our trustees and does not use placement agents at all. The term limits could be problematic. Our volunteer advocates will monitor HB 300 closely in the coming weeks.

At this point, no other bills pertaining KTRS have been filed.

2012 SESSION SCHEDULE

Legislative Part: Jan 3 – Mar 23

Concurrence Only Days: Mar 26 – Mar 27

Governor’s Veto Days: Mar 28 – Apr 7

Final Legislative Day: Apr 9

FOLLOWING LEGISLATION

To check on bills that are filed and to follow legislation, go online to www.krta.org. Then click on “Links.” Then click on “2012 Regular Session Legislation.” You can check the status of any bill or resolution.

CONTACTING YOUR LEGISLATOR

To contact your legislator, go online to www.krta.org. Then click on “Links.” Then click on “Who’s My State Legislator in the Kentucky Legislature.” You will find the contact information for your legislator.

When asked to contact your legislator identify yourself as a constituent (i.e., your name, Legislative District); say “please” and “thank you,” and try to pin down those contacted as to their position. Ask for a response!

Our message is:

1. Maintain KTRS as a Defined Benefit Group Retirement Plan.
2. Make no changes to the KTRS governance structure.

KRTA BILL TRACKING REPORT

To check on bills that KRTA is following, go online to www.krta.org. You will see a “special link” where you can check the KRTA Bill Tracking Report. This service begins today and will be updated weekly during the session.

KENTUCKY GENERAL ASSEMBLY TOLL FREE NUMBERS

Legislative Message Line - 800-372-7181

Bill Status Line - 866-840-2835

Meeting Information Line – 800-633-9650

TTY Message Line – 800-896-0305

Dust off your "email and telephone trees" and get ready to go! Share this information with your friends.

If you have specific questions or need more information, please call the KRTA office toll-free at 1-800-551-7979 or email us at INFO@krta.org.

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