

“Takin’ It To The House...”

*A Calendar And Commentary From The Golden
Dome*

From: Representative Jim Wilson - HD 60

March 10, 2019

TV soap operas have nothing on the Golden Dome for drama. This session has been like standing on a beach with wave after wave of contentious bills breaking on shore. We have already seen waves cresting on the topics of National Popular Vote, Sex Ed. and Red Flag. The latest tsunami wave to hit the Capitol was the Oil & Gas bill this past week (the committee debate lasted until 2 in the morning). SB 19-181 washed ashore over the protests of opponents who strongly feel the bill is an attempt to overturn the will of the voters last fall in defeating Prop 112. The next big wave on the horizon is HB 19-1184 designating Colorado as a Sanctuary State for immigrants. When one party controls all 3 branches of state government, the waves just keep coming...

If you look far enough on the horizon, you will see two storms gathering - one over the Red Flag Bill and the other addressing the overreach of the majority this session. Three of my counties are riding the crest of the opposition to the Red Flag Bill. Fremont, Custer and Park counties (in that order) have declared themselves “2nd Amendment Sanctuary Counties” - meaning they will not enforce a law they view as unconstitutional. The other gathering storm is currently centered over Sen. Jeff Bridges and Rep. Meg Froelich. Their districts are fed up with majority overreach and have started recall petitions against the 2 legislators. The “recall storm” may grow to engulf others before it passes over...

Even in the midst of the storm, several of my bills continue their safe voyage through the process. HB 19-1201 (Board of Education Executive Session Negotiations Strategy - Kipp & Wilson) passed out of the House on a unanimous 65-0 vote and SB 19-009 (Concerning Providing Financial Incentives for Educators to Work in Rural Areas - McLachlan & Wilson) passed out of the House on 64-1 vote (Rep. McLachlan and I have not figured out the “why” on the 1 yet). HB 19-1161 (a pilot program to revive comprehensive physical education programs across the state) passed out of the House Education Committee on a 12-1 vote. (No, it was not the same “1” as in the 64-1 vote.)

On Thursday, I signed on as the House prime sponsor of a bill which will support the teacher preparation programs across the state. The Senate prime sponsor, Senator Nancy Todd (D), is calling the bill the “Growing Great Teachers Act”. The bill was just filed, so it has not been assigned a formal bill number.

My “Biggie Bill” for this session is about to be filed. The bill, “Fully Funding Kindergarten”, has finally come together. Rep. McLachlan (D - Durango) has partnered with me as a co-sponsor in a series of meetings with stakeholders across the state to craft the bill. The “Million Dollar Question” (actually the \$233 M question) centers upon how the bill will be funded. My response has always been “Figuring that out is above my pay grade!”. Actually, the Governor’s Office, the Joint Budget Committee

and the House and Senate Democrat Leadership are all locked in a battle to determine the funding.

My money is on the Governor's Office - I have been working closely with the staff who have pulled together a funding plan. This fiscal year the local share of taxes has increased - lowering the state's obligation to fund education by \$274 M. Next year's projections place that lowered education obligation at \$327 M. Based upon those figures, the \$233 M needed to fund full day Kindergarten is feasible. Unfortunately, other interests would like to see those non-obligated dollars go to funding new programs. Stay tuned...this will be a fun storm to watch!

For a "weather update" on the Capitol storms, feel free to call my office in the Capitol at 303-866-2747 or send me an e-mail: wilsonforhd60@gmail.com or james.wilson.house@state.co.us. We are also able to schedule a visit to the Golden Dome if you would like to visit on site.

Yours for HD 60,

Representative Jim Wilson