

From: Representative Jim Wilson – HD 60

March 11, 2018

Well, believe it or not, we just passed the mid-point of this legislative session. As of Monday, there were only 52 days remaining in the 120 day session. To date, there has been a combined total between the House and Senate of 518 bills filed. More bills are showing up every day because the party in power in each chamber can file an unlimited number of bills during a session. Each session usually tallies between 650 – 700 bills. That would mean there are 125+ bills hanging out there somewhere for 2018!

Party caucuses are in the rear view mirror and the county assemblies are rapidly approaching. Caucuses and assemblies are a process and a prelude to each party’s State Assembly. Candidates are selected either by the delegates to the State Assemblies or through a petition process. Once the candidates are winnowed out by one of the two aforementioned processes, the slate of Primary Candidates is set for the Primary Election on June 26th. The mid-term election frenzy is upon us...

The historic March 2nd ousting of Rep. Steve Lebsock from the Colorado House of Representatives is also in the rear view mirror, but the road ahead is far from clear. Sexual harassment allegations are still casting a cloud over the Senate where a resolution to oust a senator is still waiting to be calendared. Hopefully, all Legislators can get back to taking care of the people’s business soon.

Getting back to the issue of bills, a big one dealing with PERA was filed last week. With over 550,000 PERA recipients across the state of Colorado, any bill dealing with PERA piques a lot of interest. SB 18-200, sponsored by Sen. Jack Tate (R-Centennial) and House Majority Leader Rep. KC Becker (D-Boulder), is now up for debate. SB 18-200 is being touted as a bill that “Has something for everyone to hate”.

Depending upon the source, PERA is facing an unfunded liability of \$32-50 Billion (yes, that is with a “B”)! Some sources claim the unfunded liability should be closer to \$80B. SB 18-200 seeks to address the shortfall by including some of the following adjustments:

- Increase the contributions from both taxpayers and employees
- Place a 2 year freeze on Cost of Living Adjustments (COLA)
- After the 2 year freeze, cut the COLA from the current 2% to 1.25%
- Set the retirement age for PERA to 65
- Address issues arising from retirees younger than 46
- Move to a defined contribution system for new hires after 2020

SB 18-200 will undoubtedly change significantly as it makes its way through the legislative process. Stay tuned on this one – the PERA debate will grab a lot of headlines for the remainder of the session!

My HB 18-1193: Extend Advanced Placement Programs passed the House 59-4 and is on its way to the Senate. I only have one of my bills in committee this week – SB 18-099: Align Early Childhood Quality Improvement Programs. Next week, however, the dam breaks with 3 of my bills in the Education Committee and 1 in the Finance Committee! I have also been asked to help carry the School Finance Bill for this session. From here on out, sleep may become a valued commodity...

Please 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 if you have questions about bills or committee hearings or would like to schedule a visit to the Golden Dome.

Yours for HD 60,

Representative Jim Wilson