



If you heard loud noises and sensed a large movement of warm air from across the Front Range this weekend – no need for alarm. It was State Assembly weekend for the Democrats and Republicans in Colorado. The D’s met in the 1<sup>st</sup> Bank Center Arena in Broomfield and the R’s (ironically) met in the Coors Event Center in Boulder. Party Primary hopefuls shouted into the microphones (which were not really needed for most candidates) and the warm air billowed from the stages like a Category 1 hurricane. Many references were made throughout the day to either an oncoming “Blue Wave” or “Riding the Trump Tide”. It is a long time until the November storm season – watch the weather...

Potential Primary Candidates espoused their experience and qualifications, hoping to woo the support of enough party delegates to be placed on the June Primary Ballot. Each assembly had its own drama and intrigue but, in the end, the list of hopefuls was winnowed down to those who garnered at least 30% of the vote. Those who made the ballot at the assemblies will join the candidates who petitioned onto the ballot, and all will campaign vigorously to win in June. Those who did not make the ballot were thanked for their participation...

On a personal note the HD 60 Assembly placed my name in nomination for State Representative for my 4<sup>th</sup> and final term. It was a humbling experience to be nominated by acclamation and to receive a standing ovation. I look forward to the election season -- it would be an honor and a pleasure to serve Chaffee, Custer, Fremont and Park Counties for another term.

Meanwhile, back at the ranch (i.e. the Capitol), the pace continues to pick up and the workload continues to grow. Just like many of you who put off filing your income taxes until the last minute, many bills continue to show up in the closing few weeks of the session. As of last Wednesday, there were a total of 332 bills still in play with new ones showing up daily. But not to worry, sometime between now and midnight on May 9<sup>th</sup>, we will either have worked our way through all of them, or they will have died on the vine until next session.

Exciting news came out of the Long Bill (the 595 page state budget bill) Conference Committee last week. My amendment (#79), to set aside \$35M to address school safety, made it through the process! School districts across the state will have access to additional funding to assist them in making their students safer. The bad news for me is that the concept is now so popular, leadership has decided to take over sponsorship of a bill to allocate the funding. Even though my Caucus worked against my amendment, they will now get the credit for its implementation – go figure...

Last week’s article listed 4 major hurdles to cross before adjournment -- the aforementioned Long Bill was one of those. The Long Bill passed out of the House on a 46-17 vote last week. One major hurdle down...three to go.

SB 18-001 – the Transportation Bill is in the House looking for the right combination of support to address roads and bridges without being caught up in debate over how much of the \$500 Million in funding could be spent on transportation “wants” other than roads and bridges.

SB 18-200 -- the PERA bill is also in the House. The PERA fight will be an intense one. All of the candidates at the Assembly were very aware of the challenges surrounding the fiscal solvency of PERA. None of the candidates articulated a solution. Stay tuned on this one...

School Finance – the 2018 School Finance Bill. This hurdle is going to be attacked this week in the House Education Committee. House Education Chair Petterson and I are co-sponsoring this bill and will present it during the week. It provides a generous increase in education funding over last year (\$266.6M on the base, \$150M to reduce the Negative Factor, \$30M for Rural Schools, \$4M for ECARE & Kindergarten plus the \$35M for School Safety). I may be jinxing myself, but I do not anticipate a great deal of opposition to the bill.

Ironically, the Colorado Teacher’s Association (the teacher’s union) descended on the Capitol on Monday to demonstrate for more school funding. In a year when there are more dollars going to Education than in any other year I have been in office, the CEA is demonstrating for more. Another example of attempting to steal the spotlight on an issue that has, for all intents and purposes, been decided for this session.

Two other bills I am sponsoring, SB 18-141 (the Income Tax Check-Off Non-Profit Donation Fund bill) and SB 18-143 (the Parks & Wildlife Measure To Increase Revenue bill) are both on the Second Reading Calendar for the House floor this week. I still have several other bills still out there in that 332 bills remaining to be addressed. Busy, busy, busy...

The pace may be getting hectic, but we always try to make the time to visit with any of you. Please feel free to contact us at any time. My office number in the Capitol is 303-866-2747, or you can e-mail me at: [wilsonforhd60@gmail.com](mailto:wilsonforhd60@gmail.com) or [james.wilson.house@state.co.us](mailto: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