

Welcome to the Legislative Update for February 6, 2009

This e-mail is provided as a courtesy of the Governor's Advisory Council on Aging. It is our intent to offer the Legislative Update weekly during the 2009 session of the Arizona State Legislature. The purpose of this service is to keep Arizona's seniors and advocates for aging services informed about bills and action taking place at the Legislature. The information provided is intended to help you form your own opinion about an issue and to give you the necessary resources and contacts to help ensure your perspective and voice are heard. *Please note the Legislative Update is non-partisan in nature.* We thank you for your interest!

GENERAL OVERVIEW:

With the signing of the six Senate bills by the Governor last Saturday, the Fiscal Year 2009 budget deficit was addressed through a range of actions. Thanks to advocacy by Governor Brewer on behalf of aging and community services, the impact to such services appears to be less than originally proposed. Many state agencies, however, are still trying to determine the full effect of mandatory cuts and transfer of funds in FY 2009.

To view a summary of the Senate bills, go to the Council's Special Session web report:

<http://www.azcapitolreports.com/webreport.cfm?webreport=381&listid=14846&print=true>

To see the Joint Legislative Budget Committee (JLBC) Fiscal Year 2009 Budget Plan with Floor Amendments visit:

<http://www.azleg.gov/jlbc/FY09BudgetPlanwithFloorAmendment.pdf>

Fiscal Year 2010 budget discussions are underway and based on the JLBC Monthly Fiscal Highlights, the deficit continues to grow. A link to the JLBC January 2009 report is available here: <http://www.azleg.gov/jlbc/mfh-jan-09.pdf>

You can learn more about scheduled budget discussion through a variety of the links located on the Arizona State Legislature website: <http://www.azleg.gov/>. A few of those sources include the floor calendars, committee agendas and press releases from both the Senate and the House.

At the end of day 26 of the 2009 Arizona Legislative Session, 1001 bills have been posted along with 86 memorials and resolutions. Several of these will be of interest to Arizona seniors and will be tracked by the Council and appear on the Legislative Update web page. Please be advised that the presence of a bill on the Council's web page *does not* represent support or opposition by the Council to that bill. It *does* mean that the bill topic is something that is likely to be of interest to or have an impact on Arizona seniors so the Council is tracking the bill's progress.

STATE LEGISLATION:

Visit the link below to view the Councils web page and the list of bills the Council is tracking.

FULL LIST:

<http://www.azcapitolreports.com/webreport.cfm?webreport=364&listid=13720&print=true>

Once all bills have been filed, we will establish the Councils SHORT list - those bills of particular focus that may affect health and safety of older adults. Using primarily the SHORT list, we will provide weekly summaries that highlight one or more bills.

Note: The website link above provides you with the current status and upcoming hearing information about the bills being tracked by the Council and is available and updated on an ongoing basis, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. We will add new bills to the website on a weekly basis until all bills have been posted, but the updated status of any particular bill is available throughout the week using the link. *Note: Information about bill status, hearings, etc. is a purchased service provided by the Arizona Capitol Times.*

Contact Your Policymakers: If you have a particular perspective about anything in a piece of legislation that is being considered, you may voice your thoughts by contacting the:

Governors Office of Constituent Services at 602-542-4331 or toll-free at 800-253-0883 .

Or you may contact the legislator from your area. If you do not know how to reach your local legislator, start at the home page on the Legislature's website and follow the instructions provided at both the Senate and House Member links.

Arizona State Legislature website: <http://www.azleg.gov/>

FEDERAL LEGISLATION:

H.R. 468

Retooling the Health Care Workforce for an Aging America Act of 2009

Retooling the Health Care Workforce for an Aging America Act of 2009 was introduced on January 13, 2009 by Rep Janice D. Schakowsky (D-IL-9).

The legislation would amend the Public Health Act to require the Secretary of Health and Human Services to expand training for health professional in the fields of geriatrics, long-term care, and chronic care management.

The Act:

- Requires an analysis of the health and long-term care workforce.
- Amends the Workforce Investment Act of 1998 to provide for information to adults and dislocated workers about health care and long-term care occupations.

- Provides for information to veterans about training, internship, and employment opportunities in geriatrics, gerontology, and long-term care.
- Amends the Older Americans Act of 1965 to require the Assistant Secretary of Aging to:
 1. develop family caregiver training materials.
 2. provide for the establishment and operation of a National Resource Center on volunteers, students, and seniors to promote partnerships between entities in the aging network and institutions of higher education and secondary schools, and to encourage projects that involve underserved communities.
- Requires the Secretary to:
 1. provide for the development of core training competencies for personal or home care aides and additional training content for nurses aides and home health aides
 2. establish a panel of long-term care workforce experts.
- Provides for the development of information and referral protocols for family caregivers of Medicare beneficiaries.
- Amends title XIX (Medicaid) of the Social Security Act to provide for coverage of assessments of family caregiver support needs.
- Provides for the studies on:
 1. the mental health workforce
 2. the aging network's capacity to meet current and future needs
 3. retention and tenure of nurse aides and home health aides
 4. spending by the National Institute of Health (NIH) on conditions and illnesses that disproportionately impact the health of older individuals

The bill, introduced in the House, was referred to the Committee on Energy and Commerce and the Committee on Education and Labor.

Stimulus Package: More debate continues at the federal level as attempts are being made to come to an agreement on the proposed package. You can access HR1: The American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 at this link provided: <http://thomas.loc.gov/>.

Contact Your Congressional Member: If you are interested in Congressional bills or wish to share your thoughts or concerns with your federal representatives, find out how to contact your congressional representatives by visiting: <http://www.house.gov/> for members of the House or <http://www.senate.gov/> for members of the Senate.

INFORMATION & RESOURCES:

If you would like to submit an educational or public service event for consideration, you can do so by sending an email with the description to: gaca@az.gov.

Be sure to visit the Governor's Office on Aging website at: www.azgovernor.gov/aging .

Thank you and have a great week!

~Governor's Advisory Council on Aging