

Welcome to the Legislative Update for March 27, 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:

Budget concerns continue to take top priority this week with little action at the legislature; bills are not moving forward.

As requested by the Governor's Office of Strategic Planning and Budgeting, state agencies conducted 2010 budget reduction exercises outlining the impact of 5%, 10%, 15% and 20% reductions. Some have posted the information at their websites.

AHCCCS: <http://www.ahcccs.state.az.us/site/>

DES: <https://www.azdes.gov/ASPNew/default.asp>

At the end of day 75 of the 2009 Arizona Legislative Session, the count remains the same - 1099 bills posted, one (1) bill signed, and 94 memorials and resolutions posted. April 10th marks the last day by leadership order for House committees to consider Senate bills and Senate committees to hear House bills.

Please be advised that the presence of a bill on the Council's web report *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 Council's web report and the list of bills the Council is tracking.

FULL LIST:

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

As part of our need to cut costs, our subscription to Arizona Capitol Times includes **one** web report (as posted above) this year so we are listing those bills we have placed on a SHORT list. They are: H2344: Vulnerable Adults; Financial Exploitation, H2347: Incapacitated or Vulnerable Adults; Sentencing, H2513: Reverse Mortgages, S1014: AHCCCS; Long-Term Care; Eligibility. This list will continue to be updated and expanded.

Highlights on action taken this week on bills the Council is tracking

H2238: AHCCCS: DES; Fraud Reduction 3/24/09 from House Rules Committee.

While no hearings are scheduled on bill tracked by the Council, please note committee meetings scheduled on April 1st, Senior Action Day

<http://www.azleg.gov/CommitteeAgendas.asp?Body=S>

<http://www.azleg.gov/CommitteeAgendas.asp?Body=H>

Reminder: Be sure to check the Arizona State Legislature website for Senate, House and Joint Legislative Budget committee agendas and updates to those agendas.

The website FULL List link 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. *Information about bill status, hearing, 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:

Governor's 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 homepage under *How do I find My Legislators* or follow the instructions provided at both the Senate and House Member links at the website.

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

FEDERAL LEGISLATION:

S.631

Patient Safety and Abuse Prevention Act

The bill was introduced on March 18, 2009 by Senator Herb Kohl (D-WI). The cosponsors are Senator Evan Bayh (D-IN), Senator Jeff Bingaman (D-NM), Senator Robert P. Casey Jr. (D-PA), Senator Thad Cochran (R-MS), Senator Susan Collins (R-ME), Senator Johnny Isakson (R-GA), Senator John F. Kerry (D-MA), Senator Amy Klobuchar (D-MN), Senator Carl Levin (D-MI), Senator Blanche L. Lincoln (D-AR), Senator Debbie Stabenow (D-MI), Senator Sheldon Whitehouse (D-RI), Senator Ron Wyden (D-OR). The purpose of the Patient Safety and Abuse Prevention Act is to provide for nationwide expansion of the pilot program for national and state background checks on direct patient access employees of long-term care facilities or

providers.

Senator Herb Kohl, Chairman of the Senate Special Committee on Aging, and Senator Susan Collins introduced the Patient Safety and Abuse Prevention Act to prevent those with criminal histories from working within long-term care settings by creating a comprehensive nationwide system of background checks. The legislation would expand a highly successful three-year pilot program, spearheaded by Kohl and authorized under the 2003 Medicare Modernization Act, which prevented more than 7,000 applicants with a history of substantiated abuse or a violent criminal record from working with and preying upon frail elders and individuals with disabilities in long-term care settings. Congressman Joe Sestak (D-PA) is expected to also introduce a companion bill in the U.S. House of Representatives.

The bill calls for states to establish coordinated systems that include checks against abuse and neglect registries and a state police check. It also adds a federal component to the background check process by screening applicants against the FBI's national database of criminal history records. Thousands of individuals with a history of substantiated abuse or a criminal record are hired every year.

On March 18, 2009, S.631 was referred to the Committee on Finance.

For more information on the bill, go to: <http://www.thomas.gov/>

and enter the Bill Number under Search Bill Summary & Status

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:

Senior Action Day April 1st

Sponsored by the Governor's Advisory Council on Aging

We hope you are planning to participate in this year's event!

The Days Itinerary

12:30 2:30 p.m. Seniors and advocates meet with legislators in pre-arranged appointments *at the legislator's offices* to share input directly in one-to-one meetings.

3:00 4:00 p.m. Program in the Second Floor Conference Room of the Executive Tower building.

4:00 5:00 p.m. Public Forum Second Floor Conference Room of the Executive Tower.

We're pleased to hear from legislators that they are being contacted by their constituents who have scheduled one-to-one appointments with them. ***Please remember should you not be able to be at the Capitol on April 1st, you can still call or email your Senator or Representative at any time.*** Contact information can be found at the links provided below.

How do I find My Legislators:

<http://www.azleg.gov/alisStaticPages/HowToContactMember.asp>

Senate Members: <http://www.azleg.gov/MemberRoster.asp?Body=S>

House Members: <http://www.azleg.gov/memberRoster.asp?Body=H>

Questions about Senior Action Day?

Email us at: gaca@az.gov

OR - Call us at **602-542-4710**.

View the flyer for more information:

<http://www.azgovernor.gov/gaca/Newsletter/2009SeniorActionDayFlier.pdf>

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.

Thank you and have a great week!

~Governor's Advisory Council on Aging