

IFA Legislative Report
April 6, 2009

We have made it half way through session this year, and what a year it has been so far. There has been a lot of turmoil with the impeachment, and a new Governor. Adding to the turmoil is the former administrations' staff is up in the air whether they are staying or going. With all of this going on, the legislative process has been much more compressed and, this session has been moving moving very hurriedly. Add to that the state is 11.5 billion dollars in debt, and a few federal indictments and you are talking about a legislative session that is very interesting, and difficult all at the same time.

We just went through the process of 3rd reading deadline for all substantive bills from the house of origin, meaning all House bills have either passed the House or died and all Senate bills have either passed the Senate or died, although this does not apply to appropriations bills. The legislature is now having a two-week "spring break" for Easter and Passover. They come back into session on April 21st, so we have a few weeks to breathe before we start working bills in committees again (this time House bills in Senate committees and vice a versa).

We will be following SB1413 and HB1087 through the committee process when we come back from break since they both passed their house of origin – with no NO votes!!!! Hopefully things will continue to follow along this same path, and without any interference from an in-party fight like we had last year, we will actually get the bills passed and signed by the Governor. We encourage all IFA and IAA members to call your legislators and thank them for voting for the bills, and tell them you support the bill that is going through their chamber now. For example, if your Senator voted yes on SB1413, please call him and thank him for his yes vote, and then ask him to vote yes on HB1087, and then call your Representative in the House and thank her for voting for HB1087, and encourage her to vote yes on SB1413. This will go a long way to show that IFA and IAA have a strong, vocal support for the bills that we are working.

Unfortunately, the license plate bill for IAA never got out of the Senate committee. Due to the budget crisis that the state is in, the Senate is not voting on any license plate bills this year (apparently there is a start up cost to the state whenever a new license plate is made). If the state finds a way to increase revenue, most likely in the form of a tax increase, we will approach our sponsor Sen. Dillard about finding a shell bill that we can put the language in, or we can re-introduce legislation in January.

We want to thank everyone who came out to Lobby Day on March 26th! It was a very successful day, and we made some excellent legislative connections. Many people met with their own legislators to discuss issues important to both organizations, and we even got pictures with the Governor. Everyone seemed to have a good time, and hopefully we can increase our numbers next year and increase our legislative contacts as well.

We look forward to continue to push our legislative goals forward when the legislature comes back, and will keep you posted on what advances or setbacks we will encounter in the final half of session.