

WAPA LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

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WAPA members please note that the Legislature is out of session until January 2005. Accordingly, the next few Legislative Updates will not focus on introduced legislation, but rather will report on other legislative items, information about the upcoming Fall 2004 elections and information about relevant current events.

A. Joint Legislative Council 2004 Study Committees

The Joint Legislative Council has finished forming its study committees for 2004, which will examine major issues and problems identified by the Wisconsin Legislature. The study committees are made up of Legislators and citizens who are interested in or knowledgeable about the study topic. The final membership rosters for the 2004 committees are expected to be completed by the end of July.

Although the Council has selected 12 topics for study, two of these topics are likely of particular interest to WAPA members.

First, the **Municipal Annexation** study committee, chaired by Senator Alan Lasee (R-De Pere), is directed to review conflicts that arise under current annexation law and practice; to review the consequences of those conflicts, including costs to taxpayers and other affected parties; to determine if there is consensus on means to reduce annexation disputes and encourage more boundary cooperation between towns and cities or villages; and to make related recommendations.

Next, Senator Ted Kanavas (R-Brookfield) is the Chairman of **Wisconsin's Transportation Network Infrastructure** study committee. This Committee is directed to examine Wisconsin's transportation network infrastructure, especially the infrastructure for the transportation modes of railroads, seaports, and air, to determine ways to improve these facilities; to encourage intermodal forms of transportation; and to encourage regional cooperation among Midwestern states in improving freight and passenger transportation to increase efficiency and to alleviate highway congestion.

B. Fall 2004 Election Update

Tuesday, July 13, 2004 was the deadline for filing nomination papers to run for elective office in Wisconsin. 392 of the 408 individuals who originally registered with the State Elections Board for this year's elections for the U.S. Senate, the U.S. House of Representatives, the State Senate, the State Assembly and District Attorney actually filed nomination papers by that deadline.

One state senator, Mary Panzer (R-West Bend), faces a primary challenge from current

State Representative Glenn Grothman (R-West Bend). Eight incumbent Republican Representatives and four incumbent Democratic Representatives face primary challenges in September, but will not face an opponent in November if they prevail in the primary.

Former Republican State Senator Gary Drzewiecki of Pulaski and former Democratic State Senator Alice Clausing of Menomonie would like their old jobs back. Drzewiecki will have to win a Republican primary in September to face current Senator Dave Hansen (D-Green Bay) in November. Clausing will have to win in a four-way Democratic primary in order to challenge current Senator Sheila Harsdorf (R-River Falls) in the November election.

C. A Good Time to Consider Communicating with Your Legislators

As the legislature is currently out of session, the next few months are a particularly good time to meet with your legislators in your district. Most legislators are spending lots of time in their districts either campaigning (if they are up for reelection) or just meeting with constituents.

If you have particular concerns regarding issues at the state level, or if you just want to meet those who represent you in Madison, consider scheduling a brief meeting with your legislator. Suggest meeting them for coffee with one or more of your neighbors or colleagues or, if you are interested, attend a campaign event.

If you do not know who your legislators are, go to <http://www.legis.state.wi.us/waml/> on the Internet, type in your address (including your zip code) and you will be matched with your legislators. Then, you can click into their personal web sites to get their contact information.

D. Current Events

Stoughton Approved “Big Box” Ordinance. On Tuesday, July 13, the Stoughton City Council voted 9-3 to amend the city's “big-box” ordinance, raising the city's store-size limit from 110,000 square feet to 155,000 square feet, which will allow the construction of a Wal-Mart Supercenter in the city. This issue had divided citizens in Stoughton for more than a year.

Livestock Siting Technical Panel Meets. The panel of technical experts appointed by the Secretary of the Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection, Rod Nilsestuen, will hold its third meeting on July 21st. The panel will continue to work on recommendations for a model application, criteria for permit assessment and approval, proposed standards for manure storage, nutrient management, runoff management and odor management.