



AzTA *ADVOCACY*

Weekly Legislative Report

April 30, 2018

Last week at the Arizona Legislature was dominated by Governor Ducey's proposal to raise public school teacher salaries 20 percent by 2020, a budget idea he put forth two weeks ago. Discussions and negotiations were in full force in both houses, with very little floor activity, as the focus remained on a budget and the proposed raises. Last Thursday saw a rally/protest at the State Capitol that was the largest in recent memory.

Approximately 30,000 "RedForEd" supporters marched to the Capitol, all clad in red, to support the teacher raise, and demanding the Governor and Legislature develop a long-term, sustainable plan. Many public schools were closed as teachers went on strike in protest of low wages, with estimates of nearly 800,000 school children staying home from school on Thursday and Friday. It is believed to be the largest teacher strike in the nation.

Today is Day 113 of the legislative session. How soon the session ends will depend on how soon a budget compromise can be reached. Both houses will reconvene today, and word is a budget agreement has been reached. Protests and marches by teachers and their supporters at the Capitol are continuing today and the teacher strike has, of yet, no definite end date.

Several bills of interest to AzTA remain active in the process. A summary of some of the more noteworthy measures is as follows:

HB 2166 (vehicle fees; alternative fuel VLT) will allow the Director of ADOT to establish a per-vehicle fee to cover the cost of funding the Highway Patrol division of DPS, and also partially and gradually repeal the VLT exemption for alternative fuel vehicles. The bill is designed to effectively eliminate the HURF "sweeps" that have been ongoing for a number of years. The Governor signed HB 2166 on April 25 (Chapter 265, Laws 2018), and the bill is expected to have a revenue stream of approximately \$140 million because of the per-vehicle fee. With the Governor's proposed teacher pay raise still the major factor in any budget agreement, it remains to be seen how this revenue stream will ultimately be used. As a budget is finalized, this will become more evident.

SB 1147 (county excise tax for transportation), introduced by Sen. Bob Worsley (R-Mesa),

funded by an excise tax. In addition, a strike everything amendment to HB 2162 on the same subject, was approved by the Senate Transportation and Technology Committee. Both bills now move to the respective Rules Committees, with HB 2162 scheduled for Senate Rules today. Discussions with various stakeholders and legislators have continued, though the difficult negotiations on the state's budget and teacher pay raises have clearly been dominant in members' minds this week.

HB 2514 (HURF distribution; cities; towns; counties) states that the Department of Transportation would allocate \$18 million from revenues of the HURF fund in the next fiscal year to small counties and municipalities. Of the \$18 million one-time transfer, \$9 million would be distributed to counties with a population of less than 250,000 persons and \$9 million would be distributed to municipalities with a population of less than 7,500 persons. The Senate Appropriations Committee passed the bill on March 29 on a party-line vote. The bill has not been scheduled for a hearing in the Senate Rules Committee, and most observers believe it will not advance, but things can change quickly in "budget week." We will closely watch this bill for any movement.

These issues are being tracked in our on-line legislative tracking service, which you can access [here](#) for automatically-updated AzTA bill information, with our comments in red.

If you have any questions, don't hesitate to contact me.

Becky Miller
AzTA Executive Director
602.550.3265
bmiller@azta.org

AzTA is a non-profit statewide organization dedicated to improving public transportation in all Arizona communities.



Copyright © 2018 Arizona Transit Association, All rights reserved.
Our mailing address is: 3104 East Camelback Road #932, Phoenix, AZ 85016

Want to change how you receive these emails? You can [update your preferences](#) or [unsubscribe from this list](#)