

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR UPDATE

WEEK 9 OF THE 90TH GENERAL ASSEMBLY

March 13, 2015

Overview of Week 9 of the 90th General Assembly ATRS Package Bills Continue to Advance

Several of the ATRS package bills have had action this week. After 9 weeks of the legislative session, the nine ATRS bills (the ATRS appropriation bill and 8 ATRS Board package bills) are well along in the legislative process. Seven of the 9 bills are now Acts and completely through the process. All 7 new Acts also had an emergency clause and the emergency clause on all 7 also passed. The 2 remaining bills have all passed at least one chamber of the General Assembly.

The ATRS legislative package has reached a point that action is much slower on the remaining bills since the General Assembly has so many bills now pending and moving through the legislative process. The bill filing deadline was this week and over 400 bills were introduced on just one day. The bill filing deadline and amending bills that were introduced as shell bills will take significant legislative energy in the next week to 10 days.

Of the 2 ATRS package bills that are not Acts, SB171, is a bill to clarify ATRS law on military service and is expected to have no opposition in the House after its unanimous passage in the Senate this week. The last bill, HB1132 on recycling tax credit, is involved in a broader review of recycling tax credits. HB1132 has passed the House but is held in the Senate Revenue and Tax Committee as negotiations on the way recycling tax credits are blended into the state revenue stream are considered. ATRS has continued to participate in the process and hopes the end product establishes a good result for all.

ACTIONS THIS WEEK ON THE ATRS LEGISLATIVE PACKAGE

Two additional Bills are now an Acts

SB50: Sponsored by **Senator Eddie Cheatham**. This is the ATRS technical corrections bill that makes minor clarifications of existing laws. **SB50** was signed by **Governor Hutchinson** on March 9, 2015, and became **Act 301**.

HB1078: Sponsored by **Representative Gary Deffenbaugh**. This is a bill that would allow a retiree who chooses his or her spouse as an Option C (guaranteed 120 payments) beneficiary to

change beneficiaries or pop-up to straight life annuity if the retiree's marriage ends by divorce or other marriage dissolution within the first 10 years of retirement. **HB1078** was signed by **Governor Hutchinson** on March 12, 2015, and became **Act 375**.

One Bill is ready to move to the House active calendar for final action.

SB171: Sponsored by **Senator Bill Sample**. This bill was drafted in response to discussion in the Public Retirement Committee. It was suggested that the law be amended for clarification and written in an easier to read format. ATRS appreciates the assistance of **Representative Douglas House** for reviewing the clarification in SB171. **Senator David Johnson** presented the bill in the Public Retirement Committee and in the Senate. The bill will soon be heard by the House. ATRS wishes to thank **Senator Johnson** for presenting the bill at the Public Retirement Committee and in the Senate.

One ATRS Package Bill Remains in the Senate Committee on Revenue and Tax

HB1132: As stated earlier, the last bill, HB1132 on recycling tax credit, is involved in a broader review of recycling tax credits. HB1132 has passed the House but is held in the Senate Revenue and Tax Committee as negotiations on the way recycling tax credits are blended into the state revenue stream are considered. ATRS has continued to participate in the process and hopes the end product establishes a good result for all.

Updates will continue

ATRS will continue to provide weekly updates on the ATRS package bills and any other bills that have an impact on ATRS. ATRS tries to work closely with members of the General Assembly on legislation to ensure issues of interest to the General Assembly are properly addressed. After the session wraps up, ATRS will provide a final broader update that explains the impact of all the legislation that is ultimately made into Acts by the General Assembly.