

**Legislative Update and Action Alert**  
**March 16, 2012**

It has been another busy week at the Capitol and another deadline has passed. This week was the deadline for floor action on general bills and there has been both good and bad news.

**Public Records:**

**House Bill 1090** revises the fees charged for providing public records by placing a fifty cents (\$0.50) per page cap for duplicating copies of public records. Rep. Mark Baker recommitted this bill to committee where it died.

**Senate Bill 2734** revises the Public Records Act to clarify that public access to a public record will not be diminished because components of data are stored in a certain manner. This bill also includes restrictions on the actual costs and fees charged in providing public records. The bill states that "any staff time or contractual services included in actual cost shall be at the pay scale of the lowest level employee or contractor competent to respond to the request." Further, the bill provides a civil penalty of \$100 per violation to any person "who charges an unreasonable fee for providing a public record." This bill passed the Senate with unanimous support.

***Please call your Senator and thank them for their support on Senate Bill 2734.***

**Campaign Finance:**

**Senate Bill 2767** requires circuit and municipal clerks to forward copies of all campaign finance reports to the Secretary of State within 10 calendar days of receiving the reports and the Secretary of State shall make all campaign finance reports available to the public online. This bill passed the Senate with unanimous support.

***Please call your Senator and thank them for their support on Senate Bill 2767.***

**Voter Identification:**

**House Bill 921** and **Senate Bill 2774** requires voter identification to be used at all elections. The ballot initiative/constitutional amendment requires the legislature to enact legislation before submitting it to the Department of Justice for approval. There are many problems with voter identification requirement and Common Cause cannot support these bills. **Senate Bill 2774** died on the Senate calendar but **House Bill 921** passed in the House (78 Yeas and 40 Nays).

***Action is needed on House Bill 921 which will be sent to the Senate. Please call your Senator and ask them to VOTE NO ON HOUSE BILL 921.***

**Voter Registration & Assistance:**

**House Bill 1132** requires homestead filing as proof of residence for voter registration. This bill makes the most recent homestead exemption filing the address of residence for a voter and the address shall be used to determine where a qualified voter is registered to vote. This bill was tabled and has died on the House calendar.

**House Bill 1315** and **Senate Bill 2768** revise the provisions and requirements for voter assistance. These bills require that no person, other than an election official, may assist more than ten voters (\*twenty voters in the Senate bill) in any election, other than a federal election. A person requiring assistance must be assisted by not less than two election officials and the persons who assist such a voter must be registered voters. Further, these bills require a person

who assists a voter to complete a declaration to provide voter assistance form and on the form the penalties for vote fraud are included. **House Bill 1315** passed in the House (63 Yeas to 57 Nays) and **Senate Bill 2768** passed the Senate (39 Yeas to 11 Nays).

*Action is needed on House Bill 1315 and Senate Bill 2768. Please call your Representative/Senator and ask them to VOTE NO ON HOUSE BILL 1315 and SENATE BILL 2768.*

**Absentee Ballots:**

**House Bill 992** and **Senate Bill 2552** authorize the use of electronic signatures for absentee ballots for enlisted soldiers. These bills should be supported by Common Cause because our armed forces should be able to vote by absentee ballots when needed. Both bills passed with unanimous support.

*Please call your Senator/Representative and thank them for their support on House Bill 992 and Senate Bill 2552.*

The next deadline is Tuesday, April 3rd for committees to report on general bills from the other house. I will keep you updated once all the bills have been referred to a committee and action will be needed.

Attached please find an updated list of bills along with the House Roster and Senate Roster.  
**Elizabeth Crowell, Esq.**