



# The Legislative Wrap-Up

*Library and Information Services, Department of Legislative Services*

---

Issue 03-11

March 17-21, 2003

---

## THE LEGISLATIVE CALENDAR

In order to complete its work during a 90-day session, the General Assembly operates within deadlines established by the Maryland Constitution, the rules of the Senate and House, as well as legislative custom. Each month of the session calendar contains dates that drive the legislative process.

Several very important legislative dates fall in March: the 55<sup>th</sup> day (March 3) is the final date for introduction of bills without suspension of the rules; the 70<sup>th</sup> day (March 18) is the Committee Reporting Courtesy Date by which each chamber's committees are to report their own bills; and the 76<sup>th</sup> day (March 24) is the Opposite Chamber Bill Crossover Date by which each chamber is to send to the other chamber those bills it intends to pass favorably.

Finally, March 31 is the 83<sup>rd</sup> day by which the Budget Bill is to be passed by both chambers. The Constitution specifies that if the Budget Bill has not been acted upon by the legislature at least "seven days before the expiration" of a regular session, the Governor is required to issue a proclamation extending the session for whatever period in the Governor's judgment is necessary for the passage of the bill. No legislation other than the Budget Bill is to be considered. Once the budget has passed, it may not be vetoed.

The legislation count for the 2003 session has reached 774 bills and 12 joint resolutions in the Senate and 1182 bills and 18 joint resolutions in the House of Delegates.

---

## AGRICULTURE AND SEAFOOD INDUSTRY

Each session sponsors put forth a number of bills concerned with the Maryland Agricultural Land Preservation Foundation (MALPF). Two current bills, [SB 626/](#)[HB 805](#), have passed their original chambers. The bills provide that farm- and forest-related uses and home occupations, as determined by MALPF, might be allowed on land subject to a MALPF easement. The legislation also modifies current lot exclusion policy to

give landowners additional choices in the disposition of lot rights.

A Senate committee took public comment on another MALPF-related bill, [HB 91](#), that allows the continuation of natural gas mining in Allegany and Garrett counties on property that becomes part of an agricultural district under MALPF, if MALPF finds that certain conditions are met. Similar legislation passed last year but was vetoed.

Also before a committee this week, [HB 1149](#) creates an Advisory Council on Maryland's Equine Economy charged with developing a plan to revitalize the equine economy to premier national status. The council is to study issues such as current regulatory structure, possible State aid and incentives, improvements at racetracks, and private or public ownership of tracks.

The Water Quality Improvement Act (WQIA) of 1998 provides for a variety of measures aimed at improving water quality throughout the State, including the development of nutrient management plans. A hearing was held on [HB 1058](#), which would suspend the provisions of and implementing regulations of WQIA from June 1, 2003, through October 1, 2004, in order to allow the Maryland Department of Agriculture (MDA) to educate farm operators on the importance of nutrient management and to seek their voluntary cooperation in meeting nutrient management plan requirements. WQIA's Nutrient Management Advisory Committee is required to study and report on ways to educate farm operators and increase the level of voluntary participation. For a variety of reasons, including a dearth of certified consultants and problems with public awareness, only 44% of farm operations subject to WQIA are technically in compliance with the law.

Committee action resulted in the withdrawal of [HB 503](#) that would have established a pesticide advisory council to address long-term problems and issues, including homeland security, relating to pesticide manufacturing, transporting, storage, use, and disposal.

Legislation concerning the oyster industry in Maryland waters advanced in both houses. The House approved [HB 820](#) that allows the Department of Natural Resources

(DNR) study of nonnative oysters to run concurrently with the National Academy of Sciences (NAS) review, rather than wait until the NAS study is completed. Amendments limit the study to Suminoe oysters and allow DNR to end the study if DNR, based on findings of NAS review, determines that the study poses an unacceptable risk to the Chesapeake Bay. The companion bill, [SB 475](#), remains in committee.

A proposal that passed a preliminary vote concerns the low oyster harvest in the Potomac River. [SB 248](#) would authorize the Potomac River Fisheries Commission (PRFC) to levy oyster repletion fees and to regulate all oyster dredging, not just dredging with handscrapes. In 1982, Virginia enacted similar legislation to expand the authority of the PRFC, but that expansion requires action by both states to become effective. The companion bill, [HB 344](#), remains in the Senate committee.

---

## COURTS AND CIVIL PROCEEDINGS

The statute of limitations for filing a civil suit against a person who sexually abused a child is extended 4 years, from the victim's 21<sup>st</sup> birthday to the victim's 25<sup>th</sup> birthday, under the provisions of [SB 68](#). It passed the Senate this week. The legislation cannot be applied retroactively to revive an action that is barred by the current statute of limitations. A bill to allow a child sexual abuse victim to file suit within a year after the resolution of a criminal case ([HB 165](#)) has seen no action since its public hearing last week.

---

## CRIMINAL MATTERS AND CORRECTIONS

Legislation to hinder access to illegal child pornography on the Web passed the House. As amended, [HB 661](#) requires police, after receiving information that child pornography resides on the server of a Maryland Internet service provider (ISP), to request the ISP to remove the alleged pornography from its server within 5 days. An ISP who fails to comply could be served with a court order requiring compliance under certain conditions. The ISP must also report to the State Police the location of child pornography that resides on its server and is located in the State. Violation of the court order or the reporting requirement is a misdemeanor earning a maximum fine of \$5,000 for the first violation, \$20,000 for the second, and \$30,000 for each subsequent violation.

[SB 135](#) increases the maximum fine for felony identity fraud from \$5,000 to \$25,000, down from the \$100,000 fine provided in the original version of the bill. Before giving preliminary approval to the measure, the Senate also struck provisions to increase the current \$5,000 fine for misdemeanor identity fraud, a crime that occurs when the value of the item gotten through the identity fraud scheme is less than \$500. Felony identity fraud requires a value of \$500 or greater. Another bill to increase penalties for identity theft, [HB 598](#), is stalled in a House committee.

[HB 68](#), as amended and passed by the House, creates a new felony crime of assault on a law enforcement officer in the second degree, with a maximum penalty of 10 years in jail and a \$2,500 fine. The crime applies to a person who causes physical injury which is neither minor nor temporary to a person that the assaulter knows or should know is a law enforcement or probation officer performing his or her official duties. A conviction under the current felony assault law requires a showing of intent, which often cannot be shown for police injuries that result from the struggle of a person to escape custody. Companion bill [SB 177](#), and [SB 369](#), bills that also seek to increase penalties for assaulting a law enforcement officer, had hearings in the Senate last week.

Legislation to expand Maryland's hate crime law to apply to interference with or injury to individuals or individuals' property because of their sexual orientation ([HB 322](#)) passed the House. Current law prohibits persecution based on the victim's race, color, religious beliefs, or national origin. Disability, age, and ancestry were removed from the original version of the bill.

The House passed [HB 110](#), a proposal to grant offenders who were convicted of manufacturing, distributing, dispensing, or possessing a controlled dangerous substance an increase from 5 to 10 diminution credits per month, equaling the number of "good conduct" credits that are given to nonviolent offenders. Excluded from the increase are volume drug dealers, drug kingpins, and 3<sup>rd</sup> or 4<sup>th</sup> time narcotic or hallucinatory drug offenders.

Bills addressing death penalty issues failed this week. The Senate defeated by a margin of 1 vote legislation that would have halted executions in Maryland in order to allow further study of racial and geographic disparities in the application of capital punishment ([SB 12](#)). The moratorium would have lasted until July of 2005. Also narrowly defeated in the Senate this week,

**SB 53** would have raised the standard of proof needed to impose the death penalty. Aggravating circumstances would have been required to outweigh mitigating circumstances “beyond a reasonable doubt,” rather than by the current standard of “preponderance of the evidence.” The bill would have had no effect on the cases of the 12 inmates currently on death row. Finally, a bill to require prosecutors to seek execution in every eligible case, except when the victim’s family objects (**HB 783**), was withdrawn in the House, 2 weeks after companion **SB 172** was defeated.

## EDUCATION

This week the Senate approved and sent to the opposite chamber **SB 75**, the Public School Charter Act. This bill grants primary chartering authority to a county board of education, and designates the State Board of Education as a secondary chartering authority in an appeal review capacity. The Senate also approved **SB 498** and sent it to the House; it repeals the termination date on the aging schools program and continues the current distribution of \$10.37 million in funding to local school systems beyond fiscal 2004. The bill also makes changes in the membership and final reporting date of the Task Force to Study Public School Facilities.

A number of proposals have moved to the opposite chamber:

- **HB 253**, with amendments, exempts an individual, other than a nonimmigrant alien, from paying nonresident tuition at an institution of higher education in the State if the individual meets certain criteria (Companion bill, **SB 520**, received a favorable Senate committee vote);
- **SB 466**, with amendments, removes the prohibition on portable pagers in public schools for all areas of the State except Baltimore City;
- **SB 558** establishes a Study Commission on Teacher’s Time and Paperwork to survey the workload, administrative tasks, and other intrusions on time that detract from teaching and learning, to analyze other states’ best practices, to analyze the benefits of a statewide individualized education program, and to pursue any other strategies to reduce paperwork and intrusions on time (Companion bill, **HB 873**, is on the House floor).

The House adopted amendments and gave preliminary approval to **HB 718**, that establishes a Task Force to Study Extracurricular Activities at Public Schools for Home School and Private School Students to make recommendations on allowing nonenrolled students access to extracurricular activities in public primary and secondary schools.

A recently introduced joint resolution, **SJ 12**, urges the governing bodies of Baltimore City, the State of Maryland, and the United States to declare the Baltimore City school system in a state of emergency and asking those governing bodies to provide financial aid to

## ECONOMIC, BUSINESS, AND CONSUMER ISSUES

The House considered companion bills repealing a requirement that a credit grantor give notice to a borrower when the grantor amends an agreement governing a revolving credit plan, if the amendment alters the computation of certain fees: **HB 331** passed the House and **SB 179**, which passed the Senate in February, was heard in a House committee.

Legislation rejected by committees this week included:

- **SB 616** that would have authorized the issuance and renewal of alcoholic beverages licenses to businesses such as large chain stores, supermarkets, drug stores, and convenience stores (A hearing has still not been set for its companion, **HB 990**);
- **SB 496** that would have required the Secretary of Budget and Management to establish a statewide Telework and Workforce Development Center Pilot Program (Companion **HB 768** is still in committee);
- **HB 927** that would have altered certain information that a consumer reporting agency may issue in a report to include items antedating the report, such as cases under Title 11 of the United States Code or under the Federal Bankruptcy Act; and
- **HB 853** that would have altered the State’s housing policy to provide for fair housing to all regardless of source of income.

A House committee referred to interim study legislation to prohibit the public posting or displaying of an individual’s Social Security number and the printing of an individual’s Social Security number on a card required for access to products or services (**HB 692**).

alleviate the conditions that led the school system to this condition.

House committees have also considered bills related to educational issues recently:

- [HB 1166](#) nullifies the current requirement that high school students pass the Maryland Functional Tests in order to graduate, by prohibiting the State Board of Education from using passage of a single examination or assessment or series of examinations or assessments as a requirement for graduation;
- [HB 1167](#) provides that public school textbooks and other instructional resources conform to the requirements established by the federal No Child Left Behind Act;
- [HB 1168](#) prohibits any public or private entity from measuring the personal or family attitudes, values, or beliefs of a public school student through a State mandated testing and measurement program or a survey. (Currently the State Department of Education, local boards of education, and the schools must cooperate with the Department of Health and Mental Hygiene in administering the Maryland Adolescent Survey conducted every 2 years. Parents may ask that their children be exempted from participation in the Survey and students are told that participation is not required); and
- [HB 1169](#) requires a local school system to obtain informed written consent from the parent or guardian of a student who wishes to enroll in a sex education course, prohibits a local system from providing health services to a student without the informed written consent of the student's parent or guardian, and prohibits a local board from adopting curricula or courses of study that promote the distribution of contraceptives.

Receiving failing votes from committees, [HB 870](#) would have authorized a public school principal's designee to make a reasonable search of a student on a school-sponsored trip and [SB 620](#) would have prohibited the State Board of Education from requiring student service as a condition of graduation.

Committees also gave negative votes to [SB 735](#), an emergency bill, that would have provided that a day when public schools are closed during a state of emergency must be credited towards the required

number of days that schools are in session during a school year, and to [SB 555](#) that would have reduced State aid to nonpublic institutions of higher education by altering the methodology for calculating the full-time equivalent student count that is used to determine aid under the Joseph A. Sellinger formula.

For several sessions, legislators have considered bills that address commercialism in schools, including products in vending machines. These measures were defeated in committee:

- [SB 395](#) would have required local boards of education to limit commercialism in public schools by prohibiting commercial advertisements on the exterior or interior of school buses, prohibiting certain contracts for electronic products or services that require dissemination of advertising to students, prohibiting provision of student personal information for marketing purposes, and restricting the level of advertising in public school curriculum materials; and
- [SB 396](#) would have required local boards of education to submit to the Maryland State Department of Education policies regarding vending machines that encourage a reduction in student consumption of foods of minimal nutritional value.

---

## ELECTIONS

The only remaining bill that would require the campaign finance reports of candidates and political committees to include the name, address, occupation, and employer of persons contributing \$251 or more ([SB 259](#)) was withdrawn this week. Its companion, [HB 666](#) was killed in committee last week.

[SB 132](#) that would have closed a loophole in campaign financing laws treating limited liability companies differently from corporations received an unfavorable report this week. The amended companion bill, [HB 660](#), is in the Senate.

---

## ENVIRONMENTAL MATTERS

Each chamber amended and sent to the opposite chamber legislation that would expand existing criminal and civil penalties for violations of certain sediment erosion and control, stormwater management, tidal wetlands, and wetlands and riparian rights provisions

administered by the Maryland Department of Environment (MDE). Other provisions authorize the courts to order restoration of areas unlawfully disturbed ([SB 393/HB 715](#)).

The House has also sent the Senate [HB 1051](#), which would alter MDE's Voluntary Cleanup Program (VCP) portion of the Brownfields initiative. The bill exempts certain property owners and operators from the definition of a "responsible person" under the Controlled Hazardous Substances Law. Other changes allow a reduction of the application fee for participation in VCP under certain conditions, and provide that a determination by MDE that it has no further requirements under VCP is transferable to subsequent purchasers under specified conditions.

Another House bill now in the Senate, [HB 970](#), establishes a Commission on Environmental Justice and Sustainable Communities within MDE to, among other things, advise State agencies on environmental justice and related community issues. This legislation provides for the continuation of an existing commission established by executive order in 2001 with a termination date of December 2003.

[HB 907](#), also now in the Senate, allows nonprofit organizations that participate in an Urban and Community Forest Program or the Green Shores Program to receive financial and technical assistance from the Department of Natural Resources. The programs promote the retention and maintenance of forests and trees and promote forested buffers around the Chesapeake Bay.

The Senate heard House legislation this week establishing a Radium Pilot Grant Program ([HB 39](#)) to provide financial assistance to residential well owners who incur the cost of adding a water treatment system to remove radium or gross alpha from their well water.

Measures no longer under consideration include:

- [SB 592](#) that would have created an Office of Indoor Air Quality within MDE (withdrawn);
- [SB 474](#) that would have imposed additional requirements on the Department of Natural Resources in the formulation of legislative or regulatory proposals, budgetary or administrative decisions, or policies (unfavorable committee vote); and

- [HB 911](#) that would have limited the disposal of cathode ray tubes from computer monitors or televisions to locations designated by the Department of the Environment (unfavorable committee vote).

---

## FISCAL MATTERS

The Budget Bill, [HB 40](#), appropriates \$22.5 billion to operate State government in fiscal 2004 (July 1, 2003 to June 30, 2004). As presented to the full House chamber on Thursday, the bill with 280 amendments reduced original appropriations by \$266 million including a reduction to the General Fund. The bill was approved by the full House at Friday's floor session. Among the cuts included in the bill are:

- \$40.1 million from State universities and colleges;
- \$15 million from aid for private universities and colleges (Sellinger Program);
- \$22.2 million from Medicaid;
- \$20 million from abolishing 1,789 positions in State government;
- \$5 million from disparity grants for the counties;
- \$1.3 million from the Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program Bonus Payment in the Department of Natural Resources;
- \$5.7 million from substance abuse programs;
- \$15.3 million from the Governor's Teacher Salary Challenge Program;
- \$2 million from the Nonpublic Student Textbook Program—leaving \$3 million;
- \$3 million from arts grants;
- \$5.2 million from juvenile justice programs;
- \$3 million from the "Sunny Day" Fund, thus eliminating all funding; and
- \$9.3 million from the deferred compensation matching payment plan, thus eliminating the match.

The Budget Bill also authorizes the Department of Budget and Management to establish a pilot employee buyout program. Under the program, the department will select agencies in which positions not critical to the agency's functions will be eliminated with affected employees receiving 1 month's salary for each year's service up to 6 month's salary.

[HB 935](#), the "Budget Reconciliation and Financing Act of 2003" also passed the House with amendments. The bill makes changes to provisions in law to increase General Fund revenues to balance the budget for fiscal 2003 and 2004 by transferring money from special funds to the General Fund, reallocating revenues to the General Fund, increasing fees, reducing certain aid amounts and certain expenses. Among the changes are transfers to the General Fund for fiscal 2003 of \$29 million from the University System of Maryland, \$150 million each fiscal 2003 and 2004 from the Transportation Trust Fund, and \$8 million for fiscal 2003 and \$11 million for fiscal 2004 from the Waterway Improvement Fund. The bill also reduces aid to community colleges and to private colleges.

The full House has approved [HB 753](#) dealing with taxes and revenues that would add \$253.8 million in General Fund revenues. Amendments to the bill incorporate a number of provisions currently found in other legislation. As amended the bill:

- requires agencies issuing or renewing licenses or permits to verify that the applicant has paid all undisputed taxes and unemployment insurance contributions;
- enhances the Comptroller's authority to collect delinquent taxes;
- requires financial institutions to provide information to the Comptroller concerning delinquent taxpayers; and
- requires the withholding of proceeds in selected transactions involving non-Maryland businesses.

[HB 753](#) also assesses a 2% insurance premium tax on health maintenance organizations and managed care organizations. The bill's provisions apply to premiums written for all policies, contracts, and health benefit plans, issued, delivered, or renewed in the State on or after July 1, 2003. Any health benefit plan in effect before July 1, 2003 must comply with the bill's provisions by July 1, 2004.

Additionally, the legislation imposes recordation and transfer taxes on the transfer of real property with a value of \$1 million or more, when the transfer is achieved through the sale of a "controlling" interest in a specified corporation, partnership, limited liability company, or other form of unincorporated business.

Other changes increase the annual report filing fee for business entities required to file the reports from \$100 to an amount varying from \$400 to \$20,000, depending on the number of employees, and add to the types of entities which must file the reports.

To enhance State revenues further, the legislation also seeks to prevent corporations from avoiding the Maryland corporate income tax by shifting income away from the State through the use of Delaware Holding Companies and other State tax avoidance techniques.

---

## HEALTH CARE AND INSURANCE

Legislation relating to mental health care needs continues to progress. The House approved on a preliminary vote the Task Force on the Needs of Persons with Co-Occurring Mental Health and Substance Abuse Disorders ([HB 433](#)). Also advancing and now in the House, an amended [SB 209](#) requires Medicaid to reimburse an outpatient mental health care provider the entire amount of the Medicaid program fee for outpatient mental health treatment provided to an individual eligible for both Medicare and Medicaid, including any amount ordinarily withheld as a psychiatric exclusion and any copayment not covered under Medicare. The House gave final approval to [HB 668](#) that modifies requirements for petitions for emergency evaluations of individuals with mental disorders to facilitate the commitment of those who pose a danger to themselves or others.

Other legislation passing in the House this week includes an amended [HB 702](#), the Darrell Putman Compassionate Use Act, that allows evidence of medical necessity to be introduced as a mitigating factor for those being prosecuted for the use or possession of marijuana and [HB 1](#) that provides a reimbursement fund for uncompensated trauma care by adding a \$10 surcharge for the issuance or renewal of a driver's license.

The Senate and House have passed different versions of legislation addressing the administration, extension, and funding of the Medbank Program, which helps individuals who lack prescription drug coverage to

access medically necessary prescriptions drugs through programs sponsored by pharmaceutical drug manufacturers. An amended [SB 334](#) transfers administration of the program to the Department of Health and Mental Hygiene (DHMH) from the Maryland Health Care Foundation and requires DHMH to request funding in the FY 2005 and each fiscal year thereafter in its budget. The program is extended to June 30, 2006. The House amended version, [HB 143](#), set for a Senate hearing next week, retains the administration of the Medbank Program with the Maryland Health Care Foundation.

Late introductions, companion bills ([SB 774/HB 1182](#)) addressing the licensure and discipline of Maryland's doctors will extend the current State Board of Physician Quality Assurance until October 1, 2003 at which time the board will terminate under the state's program evaluation act (Sunset Law). The board's duties will be transferred to the Department of Health and Mental Hygiene. Bills ([SB 500](#), [HB 790](#), [HB 791](#)) to retain licensure and discipline through the current State Board of Physician Quality Assurance or a revised board of physicians are still pending in committee.

Responding to the Maryland Insurance Commissioner's rejection of CareFirst's proposed conversion and sale to WellPoint, sponsors have offered several bills for consideration. A hearing was held this week on [HB 1179](#) that modifies the regulatory scheme for specific nonprofit health service plans, including specified requirements of their mission, criteria for retention of insurance premium tax exemption, and specifications for board composition, term limits, and compensation.

Introduced just this week and sponsored by the full membership of the Senate, a similar proposal, [SB 772](#), also proposes reforms for nonprofit health service plans, specifically CareFirst. Unlike [HB 1179](#), [SB 772](#) provides for a maximum board of directors' membership of 21 and limits board members' annual compensation to no more than \$10,000 annually. The House bill establishes a joint legislative oversight committee on Blue Cross/Blue Shield.

Another newly introduced measure, [SB 773](#), establishes a legislative Joint Committee to Investigate CareFirst, Inc., which among several stated duties, is to investigate whether the CareFirst Board of Directors in its decision to convert to a for-profit entity violated any civil, criminal, or administrative laws. Hearings were held on both [SB 772](#) and [SB 773](#) on Thursday.

An initiative ([HB 726](#)) to provide insurance coverage to Maryland's reported 600,000 uninsured received an unfavorable committee report. Companion [SB 557](#) is still pending in committee.

Bills that relate to cardiac services have died in the House. [HB 236](#), withdrawn, would have removed the certificate of need requirement from the licensing of open-heart surgery programs by the Department of Health and Mental Hygiene. [HB 828](#), voted down in committee, would have expanded the number of hospitals that provide open-heart surgery, but instead of removing the certificate of need, the bill would have changed the requirements for approval of a certificate by the Maryland Health Care Commission. The respective companion bills, [SB 337](#) and [SB 424](#) have received no Senate action. Similar legislation failed last session.

Other health legislation receiving unfavorable committee votes this week included:

- [HB 441](#) that would have expanded the authority of optometrists to issue prescriptions of certain medications and to treat certain eye diseases without having to consult with an ophthalmologist;
- [HB 509](#) that would have established a State Advisory Council on Obesity in Youth; and
- [SB 261](#), the Clean Indoor Air Act of 2003, that would have banned smoking in indoor areas open to the public and places of employment (Companion [HB 771](#) is in committee).

---

## HOUSING

The House passed [HB 722](#) to require a local government agency to report to the Maryland Department of the Environment (MDE) any known property that is noncompliant with the Reduction of Lead Risk in Housing Program. A House committee heard testimony on [HB 1146](#) that makes several definitional changes to the Program. The changes exempt single-family dwelling units from regulation, exempt certain painted surfaces and areas from lead reduction requirements, repeal MDE's authority to establish standards and requirements by setting the standards in statute, provide waivers during winter months, and exempt owners of affected properties that have been certified by an inspector from the requirement to provide notice to tenants.

## SPORTS AND GAMING

A heavily amended bill, [SB 322](#), providing for 10,500 video lottery terminals (slot machines), received preliminary approval in the Senate this week. The proposal authorizes 3,500 slot machines at Pimlico, Laurel, and Rosecroft, and 1,000 to Allegany if a racetrack is built there. The slot machines would be owned or leased by the State Lottery Commission and under the control of the Commission. From the gross proceeds of video lottery terminals, after payout to players, the Comptroller is required to pay 46% of the gross to the Education Trust Fund, 5% to the State Lottery Agency, 39% to the video operation licensees, 4.75% to local governments in which a video lottery facility is operating, and 5.25% to the purse dedication account to enhance horse racing purses. In addition the bill assesses a \$390 fee per video lottery terminal to be placed into a Compulsive Gambling Fund. This act, if passed, will take effect June 1, 2003.

---

## TRANSPORTATION

[HB 587](#), defeated by a House committee, would have created a task force to study the use of traffic control signal and speed monitoring systems. Other measures ([SB 455/HB 694](#)) still pending authorize local governments and the State to issue citations or warnings to vehicle owners for speeding based on evidence collected by speed monitoring systems.

---

## UTILITIES

An unfavorable committee vote has eliminated [SB 629](#) this session. The bill would have extended the date when an electric company would have had to provide standard offer service for residential and small commercial customers from July 1, 2003, to January 1, 2009, or as specified in a settlement agreement.

Bill status was current as of 6:00 p.m. on Friday, March 21, 2003.
--