

Shreveport Means Business

A Publication of the Greater Shreveport Chamber of Commerce



Thursday, May 13, 2010

Greater Shreveport Chamber of Commerce

COMPRESSED NATURAL GAS VEHICLE INCENTIVES PASS HOUSE COMMITTEE

The House Natural Resources Committee passed two pieces of legislation this week that will make it easier for local governments to convert their fleets to compressed natural gas vehicles. House Bill 726 by Representative Page Cortez (R-Lafayette) and Senate Bill 103 by Senator Nick Gautreaux (D-Abbeville) will create a revolving loan fund that will allow local governments to borrow the funds needed to convert their fleets of vehicles to compressed natural gas. The funds will allow the Department of Natural Resources to provide the funds through a variety of state, federal and grant money. The loans will be low interest loans. Incentives for the private sector was passed in the 2009 legislative session, so this fund will be used for public entities. The Greater Shreveport Chamber of Commerce is in SUPPORT of this.

SCHOOL BOARD TERM LIMITS FAIL IN SENATE COMMITTEE

House Bill 410 by Representative Steve Carter (R-Baton Rouge) would have allowed local districts the option of voting for term limits for school board members. The Greater Shreveport Chamber of Commerce has been in SUPPORT of term limits for elected officials for a number of years and also supported this legislation. There was discussion in the Senate Governmental Affairs Committee to amend term limits for all elected officials into the bill, but that amendment was not offered. Senator Lydia Jackson made the motion to defer the bill. The motion to defer the bill passed by a vote of 6 to 2; thereby killing the bill.

EQUAL PAY FOR WOMEN FAILS

Rep. Barbara Norton's HB 673 failed in the House Labor & Industrial Relations Committee Thursday. LABI, NFIB and the Greater Shreveport Chamber of Commerce OPPOSED the bill.

INCUMBENT WORKER TRAINING PROGRAM EXTENDED

On Thursday morning of this week, the House Committee on Labor & Industrial Relations Committee agreed to extend the Incumbent Worker Training Program (IWTP) for another four years. Senate Bill 301 by Senator Mike Walsworth also proposes three major changes to the IWTP laws. (1) Instead of a 3 year extension, the bill proposes a 4 year extension so that it is reconsidered in an even numbered year (rather than a fiscal session) when legislators can introduce an unlimited number of bills (2) If the legislature were to use part of the IWTP funds for the general fund in a particular year, then the next year the collections would be restricted; and (3) current law states that if the Unemployment Compensation Fund falls below \$1 million during periods of high unemployment, there would be no funds for the IWTP. The proposed law will lower the threshold to \$750,000 that will allow the IWTP to continue during those challenging times. The bill now goes to the House floor. The Greater Shreveport Chamber of Commerce SUPPORTS this legislation.

BUDGET STABILIZATION OPTION INTRODUCED

After suggesting options that included closing higher education institutions throughout the state, the Senate Finance Committee passed SCR 42 Wednesday afternoon that would constitutionally allow the use of 1/3 of the "Rainy Day" fund for Budget Stabilization purposes. The resolution proposed by Senate President Joel Chaisson will provide \$172 million to alleviate the budget constraints facing Louisiana's health care and higher education institutions.

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