

Sue Schafer
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 House District 24



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Town Meeting—Legislative Update
 February 28, 2009

What's Your Opinion? Contact Sue!

Legislation of Interest

✓ **HB 1192: Eliminating the Alcohol Percentage Limitations for Beer Sales in Colorado**
 by Rep. McFadyen & Sen. Veiga (*Awaiting committee hearing*)

This bill would allow full-strength beer to be sold at locations currently licensed to sell beer but are limited to selling 3.2% beer. (i.e.: grocery stores, convenience stores).

Pros:

- 1) Removes prohibition-era government limitations on alcohol sales
- 2) Convenient access for consumers
- 3) May increase grocery and convenience stores' sales.

Cons:

- 1) Potential harm to "mom and pop" liquor stores
- 2) Could cause layoffs due to decreased business to liquor stores
- 3) Juvenile clerks handling alcohol

✓ **SB 108: Funding Advancement for Surface Transportation & Economic Recovery (FASTER)** by Sen. Dan Gibbs & Rep. Joe Rice (*passed the House on 2/25/09*)

In its current form, this bill would establish or increase some fees and fines for motor vehicle registration, usage, and rental. Below is a breakdown of what these new fees would be and how much revenue they will generate:

Estimated Fiscal Year 2009-2010 Revenue from Fees, Fines, and Surcharges Under SB 09-108					
Type of Fee	Current Fee	New Fee*	Fee Change	Number Affected	Total Fee Impact
Road Safety Surcharge*	\$0.00	\$22.74	\$22.74	5,539,613	\$125,944,295
Bridge Safety Surcharge *	\$0.00	\$9.10	\$9.10	5,539,613	\$50,406,850
Daily Fee on Rental Cars**	\$0.00	\$2.00	\$2.00	12,138,750	\$24,277,500
Oversize Vehicle Surcharge*	\$79.63	\$159.26	\$79.63	54,750	\$4,360,000
Permit Fee for Divisible Loads	\$0.00	\$100.00	\$100.00	10,000	\$1,000,000
Late Registration Fee**	\$10.00	\$25.00	\$15.00	n/a	n/a
TOTAL					\$205,988,645

* This represents an average fee, actual fees for individuals will vary based on the weight of the vehicle.

** Assumes 62,250 cars will be rented 195 days each.

*** No information is available on the number of vehicles subject to the late registration fee.

Allocation of Revenue Under SB 09-108 (FASTER):

With the exception of the bridge safety surcharge, all revenue from the fees, fines, and surcharges (about \$155 million total) will go to the Highway Users Tax Fund (HUTF). Revenue from the bridge safety surcharge (about \$50 million) will go to the newly-created Bridge Special Fund.

- ✓ **HB 1272: Implementing Statutes to Implement Amendment 50 as Approved by the Voters by Reps. Massey/Pommer & Sen. Tapia** *(Passed House, awaiting Senate committee hearing)*

This bill ensures that Amendment 50 is implemented correctly and protects the will of the voters. It ensures that the extra revenue generated by increased gaming will go to community colleges and help keep college affordable. The bill prevents other entities such as the state historical fund from being able to claim any of this new revenue beyond what they already receive through gaming tax revenue.

- ✓ **HB 1274: Repeal of Colorado Death Penalty by Rep. Paul Weissmann & Sen. Morgan Carroll** *(Passed House Judiciary committee on 2/23/09)*

This bill eliminates the death penalty in Colorado, making life in prison without parole the highest punishment available to prosecutors. Money not spent trying these expensive cases would be used to increase funds for the Cold Case Homicide Team created in 2007. The legislative council staff estimates that this would mean an additional \$369,000 per annum for cold case investigations.

- ✓ **HB 1143: Allow HMOs to Basic Health Services via a Limited Benefit Plan** *(Passed House, awaiting Senate committee hearing)*

This bill, now awaiting Senate approval, allows health maintenance organizations (HMOs) to offer basic health care services to enrollees through limited benefit plans. Basic health care services include common services such as: doctor and hospital visits as well as laboratory and x-ray services. Although "limited benefit plans" are not defined in this bill, they are generally recognized as plans that limit the amount of payments, total coverage and cost per person. They do not cover catastrophic injuries or illnesses.

Sue's Bills' Update:

- ✓ **HB 1224: Gender Ratings in Individual Insurance Policies by Rep. Sue Schafer**

As amended, this bill now sends the issue of using gender rating in individual health insurance policies to the Interim Health Care Task Force to be studied. We chose to go this route in order to ensure a thoughtful, careful dialogue with all stakeholders. *(Passed House on 2/24/09)*

- ✓ **HB 1225: Risk Assessment of K-12 Students by Rep. Sue Schafer**

After much consideration, we have decided to postpone this bill about risk assessment of potentially dangerous students. I believe more time is needed to address the concerns and recommendations of all stakeholders on this issue. I am introducing a resolution that will create an interim study of this issue. *(Postponed Indefinitely)*

- ✓ **HB 1033: Regulation of Flight Schools by the FAA by Rep. Sue Schafer**

This bill removes the Colorado Department of Higher Education from regulating flight schools; they are already regulated by the FAA. *(Passed House and Senate)*

- ✓ **HB 1148: DOR and DOLA Severance Tax Communication by Rep. Sue Schafer**

This bill allows the Department of Revenue (DOR) to share information on severance taxes with the Department of Local Affairs (DOLA). *(Passed House, awaiting Senate committee hearing)*

**News flash: The state champion football and softball teams from Wheat Ridge High School were honored at the State Capitol on 2/23/09 by Rep. Schafer and Sen. Keller. Our community is so proud of these student athletes!*