



AROUND THE DOME

State Governments Political Future is Uncertain. Will you be ready?

“Only five of the current thirty eight Senators are expected to return”

For the second time in three years the Michigan Legislature has failed to pass a state budget on time. Although this could lead one to believe that everything is in total chaos, the political situation in Michigan could be considered quite stable. The State Senate has been under Republican control for 26 years. The Democrats have controlled the House for the last 3 years with growing margins, and Governor Jennifer Granholm has been in office for 7 years.

In fact, many voters prefer a split partisan control in Lansing as a way of stopping anything to radical or dangerous. This has been the case for many of the issues that the BOMA Government Affairs Committee (GAC) has been tracking. For the past several years, a Democratic member of the Michigan House has passed a bill that would “fix” the Supreme Court WPW ruling by adding new taxes on commercial real estate. Every session, the WPW bill passes the House but is stopped in the Senate. Last year a bill that could put a lien on commercial real estate if a commission was dispute passed the Senate, but was stopped in the House. This is a good system if your goal is to stop a bill, but if you are trying to get something passed, like a budget or reforms to the Michigan Business Tax, bi-partisan and bicameral compromise is necessary.

This could all change in the 2010 election. If the Republican Senate loses two or three seats to the Democrats, this chamber could give the Democratic Party total control in Lansing. On the other hand, if a Republican Governor wins next time around the balance of power could go in a different direction.

Term limits will continue to wreak havoc as only five of the current thirty eight Senators are expected to return after the 2010 elections. A full third of the House will turn over and a new Governor, Attorney General, and Secretary of State will all be assured due to term limits.

For BOMA to continue its effective government relations efforts, they need to remain diligent and aggressive. It will take time and effort to get to know all the new players. Even the returning members of the Legislature will have new leadership rolls. A new Speaker of the House and Senate Majority leader is assured as the current leaders will both be gone.

Recognizing the political landscape in Lansing just 12 months will be very difficult. Participating on the GAC and generous contributions to the BOMA Political Action Committee (PAC) can you help assure that your interests are protected, and your agendas advanced.

The "Around the Dome" newsletter is written monthly by BOMA's Michigan lobbying firm Scofes & Associates Consulting (S&A) for BOMA members to be aware of key issues in Lansing. In addition, S&A is monitoring top issues identified by the Government Affairs Committee. If you have comments on the newsletter or BOMA issues, please direct them to GAC Chairs Gregory McDuffee at Gregory_McDuffee@DWJBA.com, John Sier at John.Sier@Kitch.com or Janet Langlois at JLanglois@bomadet.org.

We welcome your comments and questions on BOMA advocacy issues.