



City of Phoenix

To: Mayor and Council
Executive Team

Date: April 23, 2009

From: Karen Peters
Government Relations Director

Subject: FEDERAL UPDATE: APRIL 17 – APRIL 23, 2009

This memorandum provides an update of the past week's federal activities – Congressional action, lobbying and national meetings. Please let me or Tom Remes know if you have any questions or need further information on specific legislation or issues.

APRIL 17 – APRIL 23, 2009

Congress Returns!

Congress returned on Tuesday from a two-week "District Work Period" recess. It was a busy week.

COPS Authorization Moves Forward

On Thursday, the House approved HR 1139, The COPS Improvement Act of 2009. The bill would strengthen the Community Oriented Policing Services (COPS) program by putting 50,000 additional police officers on the street over the next 5 years, including more than 1,100 officers in Arizona. The bill passed the House with a bipartisan vote of 342 – 78. The measure now goes to the Senate. Key provisions in the bill include:

Authorizes \$1.8 billion a year over the next 5 years for the COPS grant program – \$1.25 billion a year nationally for COPS hiring grants, \$350 million a year for COPS technology grants and \$200 million a year to hire community prosecutors.

Amends the Omnibus Crime Control and Safe Streets Act of 1968 to expand the authority of the Attorney General to make grants for public safety and community policing programs (COPS ON THE BEAT grant program).

Authorizes grants to: (1) hire school resource officers and establish local partnerships to combat crime, gangs, drug activities, and other problems in elementary and secondary schools; (2) establish and implement programs to reduce and prevent illegal drug activities, including the manufacturing, distribution, and use of methamphetamine; (3) establish criminal gang enforcement task forces; and (4) meet emerging law enforcement needs, as warranted.

Grants the Office of Community Oriented Policing Services exclusive authority to perform functions and activities under COPS ON THE BEAT grant program.

Increases and extends the authorization of appropriations for the COPS ON THE BEAT grant program for FY2009-FY2014.

Requires the Inspector General of the Department of Justice (DOJ) to report to Congress on the COPS ON THE BEAT grant program.

There is a Senate companion bill S. 167, which is pending Judiciary Committee markup.

President Obama's budget includes \$1.8 billion annually over five years for the COPS program. A yes vote was to pass the bill.

Voting yes: Kirkpatrick, Pastor, Mitchell, Grijalva, Giffords

Voting no: Franks, Shadegg, Flake

New Representative from New York

Venture capitalist Scott Murphy (D) will be sworn into Congress next week to fill Sen. Kirsten Gillibrand's (D-N.Y.) vacant House seat. Murphy's Republican opponent, Assemblyman Jim Tedisco (R), conceded late Friday.

With the final challenges to absentee ballots concluding on Friday, Murphy led by more than 400 votes with just a few hundred left to be counted, a small enough universe to convince Tedisco that continuing would not reverse the results. This close race took more than three weeks from the March 31 special election to confirm.

Tedisco began the race with a big lead – a poll conducted for his campaign in early February showed him with a 50 percent to 29 percent lead. The last poll showed that lead gone and Murphy ahead by a small 47 percent to 43 percent margin.

No Minnesota Senator until Summer

The Minnesota Supreme Court decided on Friday not to hear oral arguments until June 1 in that state's contested Senate race. The time table is frustrating for Democrats who want to seat Democrat Al Franken, who would be the 59th Democrat in the Senate. It's a minor victory for Republicans, who appreciate every delay in this case and face an uphill battle in overturning Franken's 312-vote lead.

Even if he loses at that level, Sen. Coleman's lawyers have promised a federal appeal, further pushing this unresolved Senate race into the summer, if not the fall of this year.

Arizona Delegation Votes *

U.S. WATER POLICY: Voting 413 - 10, the House sent the Senate a bill (HR 1145) aimed at improving the performance of the 20-plus federal agencies involved with providing the nation with adequate water supplies and clean drinking water. The bill would establish a White House office charged with adding focus to federal water policy and eliminating duplicative research and development programs. The bill is projected to cost \$8 million over five years, including \$2 million in additional funding for the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA). About 36 states will experience serious water shortages over the next five years, according to debate. A yes vote was to pass the bill.

Voting yes: Kirkpatrick, Pastor, Mitchell, Grijalva, Giffords, D-8

Voting no: Franks, Shadegg, Flake

CHRISTOPHER HILL CONFIRMATION: Voting 73 - 23, the Senate confirmed career diplomat Christopher Hill as U.S. Ambassador to Iraq. Supporters said Hill has proven to be a skilled diplomat during 32 years in the Foreign Service. Opponents said that as President Bush's lead negotiator with North Korea, he conceded too much on nuclear-arms and human-rights issues. A yes vote was to confirm Hill.

Voting no: McCain, Kyl

WHISTLEBLOWER REWARDS: Voting 31 - 61, the Senate refused to cap at \$50 million the reward for whistleblowers who use the False Claims Act to help the government recover funds lost through fraud. The act authorizes private citizens to file fraud suits on behalf of the government and receive up to 30 percent of any recovery. It has led to the Treasury recovering about \$22 billion over the past 20 years. This amendment was offered to a bill (S 386) still in debate that would toughen federal laws against financial crimes such as mortgage and securities fraud. A yes vote was to adopt the amendment.

Voting yes: McCain, Kyl

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