



Member Alert

March 14, 2006

House Passes HB 337 by 83-14 Vote

HB 337 was finally called on the House floor today and passed by 83-14 vote. Three amendments had been filed that would have “gutted” the bill but only 1 was called and was easily defeated. Reps Robin Webb (D-Grayson) and Joe Barrows (D-Versailles) were the only members to speak against the bill.

The bill sponsors and telecom supporters had been working the members since the bill passed the House Tourism Development and Energy committee last week. The message was to vote no on the amendments and yes on the bill in its current form. Opponents worked hard to either keep the bill from being called for a floor vote or to vote for the amendments.

The bill sponsors had informed House leadership that there were enough votes to pass the bill and originally expected the bill to be called for a vote last Friday. Instead, House leadership indicated it would allow a floor vote either yesterday or today.

The bill now moves to the Senate where it has to the end of next week to pass. The bill should be assigned to the *Senate Agriculture and Natural Resources Committee* tomorrow and may be heard as early as Thursday. KTA member lobbyists will begin working the bill in the Senate tomorrow morning, beginning with a KTA office letter to all Senators to support the bill. Opponents to the bill are expected to remain the same – AARP, some CLECs, MEPAK and possibly the Attorney General. The PSC should remain neutral. Sen. Richie Sanders (R-Franklin) will be the primary sponsor of the bill in the Senate. The Committee members are:

Tom Jensen (R-London) - chair
Vernie McGaha (R-Russell Springs) - vice chair
David Boswell (D-Owensboro)
Ernie Harris (R-Crestwood)
Dan Kelly (R-Springfield)
Bob Leeper (I-Paducah)

Joey Pendleton (D-Hopkinsville)
Dorsey Ridley (D-Henderson)
Richie Sanders (R-Franklin)
Ernesto Scorsone (D-Lexington)
Damon Thayer (R-Georgetown)

ACTION REQUEST: *If your senator is on the committee, contact them as soon as possible and ask them to vote for HB 337. If not on the committee, still contact your senator and ask them to support HB 337 when it comes to the Senate floor. Call them in Frankfort at 800/372-7181 (legislators' message line) or 502/564-8100 (LRC office, and ask to be connected directly to their office).*

It is important that legislators hear from their local constituents supporting the bill. At this late date in the session, they need to hear the local support from their own districts. The strong 83-14 vote in the House indicates that members heard the local support. Let's keep it up in the Senate.

This is an email publication by the Kentucky Telephone Association for the benefit and information for its members and friends. Send questions and comments to [Forest M. Skaggs](mailto:Forest.M.Skaggs), Executive Director. KTA office: 851 Corporate Drive Suite 105, Lexington, KY 40503. Tel – 859/223-9001, Fax – 859/223-2601, www.ktaoffice.org.