

What's New with Jon

February 20, 2008

Dear Constituents:

Here is my report for the week ending February 15, 2008 (Happy belated Valentines Day):

1. Energy – We passed a good energy bill (S-209), which now returns to the Senate for consideration of our changes.

On Friday, several of you e-mailed me that Vermont Yankee's tax is too low. I agree, but the problem is broader. A significant portion of my legal practice over the last 20 years has involved valuing electric generating plants. Valuation techniques vary, and the data we use is becoming outdated. At my suggestion, money was included by the energy bill that was vetoed to study the issue generally with the hope of making valuations more consistent. This was dropped from S-209. Hopefully, we can find another way forward on this issue.

2. Campaign Finance Reform – We passed a good bill that fairly resolves the competing interests.
3. Tires – My Committee voted out the tire bill 8-0 with one member absent. (Bill Johnson's wife broke her arm in several places. Bill has had to stay home to keep his large farm running.) Those voting in favor included two Republications including the minority leader. His vote may indicate that we will not have a partisan floor fight when (if) we get the bill to the floor. Because the tire bill raises a small fee (50¢ per tire), it now goes to Ways & Means—an eleven-member committee. At least a majority of members must support the bill to get it to the floor. This may be a challenge, but I will try as hard as I know how (last week, the Free Press said I was pursuing the bill with “dogged determination”).
4. Riparian Buffers – On Tuesday, we voted this important bill out. The bill will go to Appropriations and then to the floor.

5. Veterans' Moose Hunting – We are in the process of approving the set aside of five moose hunting permits for Vermonters seeing action in Iraqi Freedom and Ending Freedom (Afghanistan) operations. General Dubie testified that anything we can do to send a message of support for our soldiers helps them reintegrate to our society.
6. Clean & Clear – We will spend next week on this issue with the intent of voting a bill out by the last Monday in February.

Very truly yours,

Jon Anderson

This message is intended to reflect my personal view of issues facing the Legislature. It is NOT intended to be a comprehensive or thorough discussion of any topic, just a few lines to stimulate thought. If you would like to be added to my subscriber list (or removed from it), please send an email to: janderson@vtlaw1.com. Please feel free to contact me if there is anything I can do to assist you in dealing with Vermont Government.