

**Legislative Update Issue 6 (or 7) Volume 6 (or 7)
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Civil Immunity for Donated Fire Equipment:

House introduction on Thursday (Bigham), hearing request for Senate has been in since February 16th. We are confident this bill will get passed this year.

Pensions:

Commission meeting this AM. State Auditor Otto testified on the OSA working group, a few questions, a couple of amendments and then motion to include bill in omnibus pension bill. You can see all meeting materials on the LCPR website. The big provision in this bill allows you retire (at age 50), receive your pension payment (Lump Sum plans only) and return to service (60 day waiting period) without having to return the money. In addition, you can start to accrue more service. To do all this though you need a bylaw change.

Voluntary State Wide Volunteer Pension Bill also heard this morning and also had motion to include into omnibus pension bill. Questions from commission on provision to make sure this was voluntary; needs both city and relief to pass resolution.

Training and Education Board:

Just under 300 requests for reimbursement that totaled approximately \$1.8 million. Goal is to inform FD's by March 23rd on what they will receive.

Authoritative IRC Council:

Still no committee hearing scheduled (this is a good thing)

MSFDA Conference in Owatonna:

Confirmed today the Auditor will be doing one of the relief sessions at the conference on Friday morning.

Fire Service Day at Capitol:

Close to 180 firefighters attended. **THANK YOU**. Joint Council received lots of positive feedback and suggestions; all of which will be evaluated. These included; move to Tuesday or Wednesday, start an hour later, look into using the Kelly Inn (right by the capitol), longer briefing session, and have one or two legislators speak at briefing then be done.

Budget Watch:

Now that the forecast is out, things will start "heating" up. The first policy deadline is just over 3 weeks and upon conclusion of that, efforts will turn in earnest to the budget discussion. Senate Tax Chairman Tom Bakk announced in his address to the firefighters yesterday that the Senate will be offering a counter proposal to the Governors Budget (which leaves the Fire Safety Account along) in the next week or two.

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