

The **Association** report

from the **Capitol**

March 31, 2011

The state legislature returned this week from its annual spring break with plenty of projects to address before the session is scheduled to end in mid May.

One of those projects, the “Retirement Incentive” bill, HB305, has been voted out of the House Retirement Committee and is currently in the House Rules Committee. Indications were offered earlier this week that the bill would be taken up soon and sent to the house floor for debate. Most observers are optimistic that HB305, with an expected savings of \$10 million to \$20 million, would pass the house. Its fate in the senate, however, is unknown.

Another state worker-related proposal, HCR32, was heard in committee just before the legislative spring break. This measure, sponsored by Jefferson City Representative Mike Bernskoetter, would set up a special committee to study state employee salaries.

“We’ve lost several hundred employees in the past several years,” Rep. Bernskoetter said. “the workforce is smaller yet they’re supposed to do the same amount of work. So they should be adequately compensated.”

In other legislative action, HB282 which would automatically enroll all new employees in the state’s deferred compensation plan, has passed the house. The bill’s sponsor, Rep. Ward Franz, said the bill is intended to better acquaint new state workers with the deferred comp benefit. He emphasized that a worker can “opt out” of the plan at any time.

Another bill of interest, SB285 which would remove Lincoln’s birthday as a state holiday, has not been given a senate committee hearing.

**From Harry Hill, Lobbyist
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