

The City Buzz

AM Alert: *Old bills, new business await returning COTH Legislature*



ROCKLIN- Welcome to a new session of COTH politics!

It was a busy 2015 – if you need a refresher, see page 2 – and 2016 promises to be action-packed too.

Among the first order of business when the legislature reconvenes will be the election of a new Speaker of the COTH Assembly, a position which now sits vacant. Since Speaker Emeritus Karin Anderson, known as “the Willie Brown of COTH”, termed out in 2009, the Assembly has

had a continuous turnover of presiding officers. Not a single Assembly member has been able to hold the position for the entirety of a legislative session, despite valiant efforts by last year’s Speakers Emeritus Tirado and F. Rutledge.

Amongst the measures scheduled for committee hearings this week include proposals to deregulate Vietnamese cuisine storage, track animal abuse, and require domestic manufacturing of state-purchased flags.

Relaxed regulations bring lobbyists to COTH

This year, lawmakers won’t be the only people flooding to COTH. Earlier this year, the COTH Fair Political Practices Commission (FPPC) relaxed existing regulations that had effectively banned lobbyists from engaging members of the COTH legislature. For the first time in COTH history, Assembly members will find their offices bombarded by special interest groups and paid advocates attempting to influence legislators’ voting decisions and policy proposals (see sidebar on P2 for some examples). Some lobby on behalf of moral issues; others, to promote policies that give them a competitive edge over their business rivals.

Join the Club!

Are you particularly interested in something? (It can be anything...literally anything at all.) Great news – there’s a special interest group/association/council/foundation/etc. for that! They’ll testify in committees, meet with legislators, and do whatever they can to protect your industry, no matter how niche it may be.

Perhaps you’re passionate about plastic bags. If so, the American Progressive Bag Alliance (APBA) is for you (and they spent over \$13,000 on lobbying activity for just last year)!

Are you an advocate for asphalt? Consider joining CalAPA, the California Asphalt Pavement Association (they spent over \$62,000)!

And if you yourself are a lobbyist...you can join the Institute of Governmental Advocates! For lobbyists, by lobbyists, the IGA spent nearly \$23,000.

2015 HIGHLIGHTS

No legislators were arrested for corruption, but 2015 was another turbulent year in COTH politics. If you can’t remember it all, we’ve got you covered - from landmark legislation to party politics.

PEOPLE

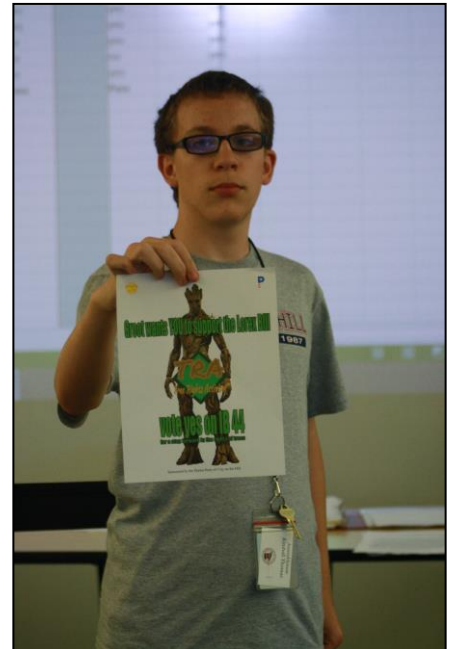
Assemblyman F. Rutledge was named Legislator of the Year, while Assemblywoman Petrikas received recognition for her outstanding accomplishments as a freshman legislator. Both members are returning this year.

POLITICS

Though the Patriot Party began with the majority of members, interparty politics led to an exodus of ex-Patriots to join the Constitutionlists. Those who made the switch cited party unity within the Constitutionalist Party as a deciding factor.

POLICY

Legislatively, Assemblyman Thomas (*shown above right*) went out on a limb with the



Lorax Act, known colloquially as “the tree bill,” which sought to extend equality to foliage. It rapidly grew from a grassroots movement to obtain party-wide backing. With support from environmentalist expert Dr. Theodor Seuss Geisel and a *He for She for Tree* Twitter campaign, the idea blossomed and became a central plank in his party’s platform. Unfortunately for Thomas, the bill was vetoed by Governor England.

Looking to Boost Your Campaign?

Let City Consulting help you! Purchase advertisements, consult with top political experts, and more!

More info to come.

LAUREN PRICHARD is the returning editor for the *CityBuzz*.

She currently works in the (superior) Upper House for Senator Nielsen.

