

The **Association** report

from the **Capitol**

January 18, 2007

Three weeks have passed since the 94th General Assembly officially opened in the Missouri Capitol and legislative business is still in the “getting ready” stage. On Thursday (Jan. 18) the house debated and passed procedural rules which will allow committees to be named. The senate, with five new members, produced a complete committee list at the end of the second week.

While it may seem that the legislature this year is moving at an unusually slow pace, perhaps it is reasonable when the circumstances are examined. The “term limits” law has a far-reaching effect on legislative behavior, extending even into the pace of work at the capitol. Most of the 28 new members in the house are replacing veteran members, many of whom are replacing committee chairs. New chair persons are appointed and committee members are juggled and reassigned. Not to be overlooked, also, is that 13 new committees were created in the house to be added to the 35 committees that were carried over from last session.

Our Association has an interest in some of the new committee chairs named recently. Rep. Maynard Wallace was picked to replace Todd Smith as chairman of the House Retirement Committee. Mr. Smith, who became director of legislative affairs for the governor, sponsored (without success) legislation to merge our retirement system with MOSERS. No bills have been filed to this date that would propose to merge the two retirement systems.

In a chairmanship vacated by “term limits,” Rep. Charlie Schlottach of rural Owensville, was named to succeed former Rep. Lanie Black as chair of the House Appropriations Committee for Transportation. Rep. Schlottach, you may recall, was the house sponsor last session of our prior service purchase bill. Rep. Neal St. Onge remains as chair of the House Transportation Committee and Sen. Bill Stouffer is to continue as Senate Transportation Committee.

HB90, which expands the seat belt law, is sponsored by Rep. St. Onge along with 38 cosponsors.

**From Harry Hill, Lobbyist
Missouri Highway and Transportation Employees' Association**