

Welcome to the Marble Floor Marathon

Running up to the beginning of session things looked as good as any opening day of a new legislature could. I had already met with the Chair of Senate Transportation, we had hammered out workable language to reduce motorcycle weight fees by \$10.00, and staff had already submitted the language to the Code Revisor for formal drafting. All that was left to do was to get our potential sponsor, recommended by the Chair, on board. They were a new member without a lot of irons in the fire, and we had already had a phone briefing to make the pitch.

Easy peasy, forward trundle, right? Right up until around 21:00 on the Thursday before session when I get a message that the Senator likes the proposal but does not wish to be on the sharp end of the rope.

Insert the proper amount of invective here. (Yes, Tex can cuss quite artfully at times.)

07:30 Monday morning found me nursing a white chocolate mocha in the Legislative Building snack bar and pouring over legislative rosters. I was afraid that the sudden reversal was due to the Governor Elect declaring a 6% across the board spending cut and people were running away from anything that might cut funding. This might make lining up a Democrat prime sponsor a bit more problematic, and I wanted the "D" on the top line for tactical leverage.

Fast forward to 08:01, and my freshly caffeinated self was standing at the security station in JAC (Democratic Senate Office Building) working on getting me back to the bailed sponsor's offices to drill down and find out any back story. I was told "they'll be right out," but imagine my surprise when, in lieu of a staffer, the Senator comes zipping out to chat. And it was a good conversation. 😊

I'll not regale you with the details of the next two days, because a lot of it was a flurry of phone calls, emails, and a 45 second flying meeting with Senator Liias, all in a caffeinated haze. (I may have pitched the idea to a member of the custodial staff.) The bottom line is that by the end of day 2, I had gone from zero sponsors to having 2 Senators stepping up to the plate. We have a bill ([SB 5309](#)) being carried by Sen. Cortes (D-18) with Sen. MacEwen (R-35) as second seat. As I type, there are more Senators expressing support, and I am hoping that by the time you read this there will be more names on the bill, but I have deadlines for submission to the newsletter.

Lane sharing is still in flux, but that is to be expected. As stated in the last newsletter, the bill might turn into a "conversation starter" so that we can further discuss how we move forward. As of this writing, Rep, Orcutt (R-20) has yet to bring the right shoulder riding measure forward.

The plan is to start our bill(s) in the Senate without concurrent bills in the House and work the issues in a linear process. Too many times, we have heard "we will deal with that when the opposite chamber sends it to us." Single point processing defuses that deflection.

Until next time, ride safely and legislate well.

"Texas" Larry