

The **Association** report

from the **Capitol**

February 1, 2006

Activities around the capitol are starting to look more like a legislative session after the house and senate completed committee rosters by the end of the fourth week. While the senate has scheduled a full agenda of committee hearings, house committees are posting meeting notices that are “organizational” or “informational” in nature. (For the 5th week of the ‘07 session)

Dozens of bills are filed each day legislators are in the capitol. One of those filed on Thursday, (Jan. 25) is HB631, the house version of the “prior service purchase bill.” It is sponsored by Rep. Charlie Schlottach of rural Owensville. Rep. Schlottach was recently appointed chairman of the House Appropriations Committee for Transportation.

In one of those “informational” committee hearings mentioned earlier, MoDOT Director, Pete Rahn, appeared Tuesday (Jan. 30) before the House Transportation Committee. He reported that 2006 had been an exceptionally good year for MoDOT. He said that the “smooth roads initiative,” which includes more than 2,200 miles of highways, was finished in less than two years, well ahead of schedule. “Last year was our biggest road improvement year ever,” Mr. Rahn said.

“Our focus this year,” he continued, “Is passage of the ‘primary’ seat belt law. I plead with you for your support of this. We lose 90 lives every year because we don’t have a primary seat belt law.” Our Association has agreed to support the legislative effort to strengthen the seat belt law.

Mr. Rahn also told the committee the department is attempting to deal with a major bridge replacement project. He said the department has a \$2.3-billion budget with 78% of that going to construction and maintenance. He added that only 2% of the budget goes for administrative costs.

**From Harry Hill, Lobbyist
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