**Legislative Update**

**January 28, 2013**

As you all know, the 2013 Session of the Legislature is off and running.  Committees are formed and are scheduling hearings on bills; although the area of Corrections and Public Safety has been pretty quiet so far.  Commissioner Roy and the DOC will be presenting the DOC overview and budget information to the Senate and House Committees in the next few days and Committee Chairs have been scheduling various agencies to provide background info to Committee members, which is really important with all the new legislators still working to get a handle on everything.  I have been busy getting around to visit with legislators on our Public Safety/Corrections and Judiciary Committees and trying to spend some time with the Chairs relative to our MCA agenda for this year.  
  
As of today, there have been 213 bills introduced in the House and 165 in the Senate.  Only around 15 of those bills fit into our "watch" area and most thus far, deal with restoration of voting rights and civil rights restoration of convicted felons.    
  
In regard to our **Legislative Tracker**, I am still working on a new format to report to you.  Last year, we used a tracking system developed by the legislative staff.  This year they have made significant changes to the format and it is designed for electronic tracking.  This leaves too much work for each of you to follow up on a specific bill when I know for the most part you simply expect an update from me on the status of bills we choose to track.  I will instead be submitting our own tracker log with bill updates.  I am preparing this now and will have something to you by the end of this week and then update that, every two weeks or earlier if necessary.  
  
It doesn't appear this is going to be an overwhelming Session for Public Safety/Corrections, but several Committee Chairs have indicated interest in some specific policy areas which we'll likely see introduced in the near future. To date, none of the bills we'll track have been scheduled for hearing.    
  
We have already received confirmation notices from Rep. Deb Hilstrom, Rep. Joe Mullery, Senator Warren Limmer, and the Committee Administrator for Rep. Michael Paymar in the Public Safety Finance and Policy Committee, who will all make some comments at the **Capitol Day** event scheduled for **Thursday, February 21st**starting at 7:30 AM.  I am confident we'll have three or four more legislators join us that morning for breakfast, so plan to attend.

Member attendance is important for the success of this event.  Remember to pre-register thru Deb Beltz at mca-mn@hotmail.com.

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