

Under the Dome: Inside the Maine State House 3.2.12

Friday, March 02, 2012

Augusta, ME

Under the Dome: Inside the Maine State House is a weekly update that provides a high-level overview of recent activity at the Maine State House. If you would like more specific information regarding an item in this newsletter or related to government relations, please contact a member of our Government Relations Practice Group: [John Delahanty](#), [Andrea C. Maker](#), or [Avery Day](#).

SENATOR SNOWE NOT RUNNING FOR REELECTION

On February 28, 2012, Senator Snowe announced that she would not be running for reelection, citing her frustrations with growing partisanship in Washington, D.C. This decision quickly set off a flurry of activity and speculation as a number of political figures began considering their options. The opening of this one seat set off a cascade of effects down the ballot as Maine's Congressional representatives considered running for Senate and various legislators considered running for Congress. Some formal announcements have been made and the activity is starting to settle a bit, but the situation still remains fluid.

The timing of Senator Snowe's announcement contributed to the flurry of activity, as Republican and Democrat candidates must submit petitions with sufficient signatures by March 15th in order to qualify for June's primary ballot – putting a very short fuse on all decision-making. Independent candidates have a bit more time to submit their signatures and have the ability to assess the field before entering any races. As stated above, the situation remains fluid but should soon become clearer as to who is running for which office due to the March 15th deadline.

APPROPRIATIONS HEARS NEW REVENUE PROJECTIONS, DISCUSSES BONDS

The Appropriations and Financial Affairs Committee met on February 27th and 29th to receive a briefing regarding the most recent revenue forecast and to discuss bonds. The Committee heard that revenue projections in the near term have been revised down slightly, creating an additional \$14 million deficit in the State's budget. The Governor is expected to submit a second, agency-wide supplemental budget soon, which will have to account for this reduction in revenues in some manner. The Committee's meetings this week also included some discussion of the process that the Committee will use to sort through the number of bond proposals pending before the Committee. Many in Augusta are expecting that a modest bond package focused on infrastructure could be approved this legislative session.