

# Legislative Toolbox



## It's Not Over Til...

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**T**he Legislature can be a very frustrating place, especially during the last month of a legislative session. Below are some good words to live by these next few weeks:

- Nothing is ever dead in the Legislature.
- Session is not over until sine die.
- Never leave early.
- A conference committee is a different ball game.
- If you hear it, don't repeat it. If you see it, don't report it.
- Take nothing for granted.
- Nothing is totally true.
- Look out when someone says, "I wasn't planning on talking, but..."
- Always remember, every bill has to be signed by the Governor.
- Smile at the House Speaker and the Senate Majority Leader.
- Never say "never". Say "hardly ever..."
- There is always next year.

### **I thought it was dead!**

Just when you think something isn't going anywhere, it suddenly reappears in a different committee or as an amendment to another bill. And, sometimes conference committees provide unexpected results.

A defeated issue could be added to an omnibus bill or other legislation in either body. And defeated bills remain before the bodies or committees that defeated them — and can be revived at any time by motions for reconsideration. Such a motion must be made by a legislator who voted on the prevailing side (the winning side, which succeeded in killing the issue). It is not unusual, when it is obvious that an issue is about to be defeated in a vote, for a legislator who supports the bill to change his or her vote just so that at a later time, he or she can move for reconsideration as one who voted on the prevailing side.

When a bill is defeated, legislators who wanted it passed will usually talk with others who opposed the bill to determine what changes might be needed to earn their support. If changes can be made that would cause enough legislators to agree to change their votes, proponents will move for reconsideration and make the necessary changes, call for a vote and pass the bill. Although these procedural motions can be maddening, it is important that they exist to give all members every opportunity to have their concerns addressed. In addition, something may come up late in session and members need ways to have these issues considered.