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The Legislature cut its work week from three days to two days because of the bad weather in North Alabama. Both Houses convened on Thursday only to adjourn after a word of prayer for the storms victims.

The two days that they met however, were very productive for AGC. On Tuesday the repose Senate Bill, SB59, cleared the House Committee. Then on Wednesday the House Bill, HB132, was reported out of the Senate Committee. This puts either bill only one vote away from being sent to the Governor's desk. Although the bills can receive their final vote in either House the plan for now is for the House of Representatives to vote on the Senate bill. We hoped that might be next Tuesday. Now with Thursday being burned because of the weather, we are not so sure.

Rumor has it that both Houses will work three days next and then take a two week break and return to take up Congressional Redistricting. If that in fact turns out to be true we may have only three days to get a final vote on your legislation.

In other action, the four-bill tort reform package cleared both house committees this week as well. They too are now in position to get final passage in either house but are expected to ride with our repose bill back through the House.

Immigration legislation for now has reached an impasse. Both Houses have their own version, HB56 by Hammon and SB256 by Beason. The bills are different in many respects and business is not comfortable with either. We have amended both to the extent that the sponsor would allow us to but both bills have problems. Hopefully, one of two things will happen with this issue: either neither House will give and nothing gets passed or a compromise will be worked out where business will get a better all-around bill.

And finally, the "Tax at the Rack" legislation is back on track. After more negotiations all sides seem to be in agreement and the bill could be on the House calendar next week.

Our thoughts and prayers go out to all those folks in north Alabama who were affected by the storm this week. Our Birmingham office is serving as the clearing house for any questions or news about relief measures. Please call them with any questions or information.

Until next time.

Chris Williams
Director, Governmental Relations

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