

State Bar of California, Office of Governmental Affairs

The Sacramento Scene

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BILL INTRODUCTIONS

Continuing a recent trend, most lawmakers waited until the very end to introduce most of their bills this year. The first three days of this holiday-shortened week saw 909 pieces of legislation introduced – almost 60% of all the bills introduced so far in 2002 – with another 500 or more expected to be introduced today, the official deadline for bill introductions.

The bill limit we mentioned in the February 1, 2002, newsletter (30 for each Assembly Member, and 65 for each Senator) will be expanded for this session. The Assembly is permitting its members to request another 10 bills for 2002 and our sources felt that many requests will be granted - especially for noncontroversial bills. Therefore, it is possible that about 5,000 pieces of legislation will be introduced in the 2001-02 session.

The Office of Governmental Affairs maintains a web page listing [newly introduced and amended bills](#).

LEGISLATIVE HEARINGS

On Tuesday the [Assembly Committee on Business and Professions](#) held a hearing on "Accounting practices: corporate audits, protection of consumers, employees and shareholders." Don't be surprised if more Enron-related hearings are held between now and November. The [Assembly Select Committee on Privacy](#) held a hearing on "Privacy in an Online Age." The privacy issue continues to be big in the Capitol, and the media is giving it a lot of attention. On Wednesday the [Senate Committee on Energy, Utilities and Communications](#) held a hearing on "California's Demand for Energy." The energy issue also continues to be a key issue in the Capitol.

The [Senate Judiciary Committee](#) and the Assembly Select Committee on Language and Access to Government will hold a joint hearing Tuesday, February 26 (1:00 p.m., Rm. 4203), on "How California can best ensure that people who speak little or no English have access to their rights, their government, and its services."

SENATE RULES APPROVES BAR APPOINTEES

On Wednesday, February 20, the Senate Rules Committee voted unanimously (5-0) to recommend confirmation of the State Bar Board of Governors' appointment of [Mike Nisperos, Jr.](#), as Chief Trial Counsel, and Governor Davis's appointment of [Janet Green and John Snetsinger](#) as public members of the Board of Governors.

Final confirmation for all three appointees requires a vote of the full Senate, which is likely to occur by the end of next week.

Because of the nature of the Chief Trial Counsel position, Nisperos was the only one of the three required to appear at the hearing. He adroitly handled questions posed by Senator [John Burton](#), (D-San Francisco) committee chair, and Senator [Betty Karnette](#) (D-Long Beach) regarding his plans for improving the Bar's disciplinary system.

OTHER APPOINTMENTS AND SELECTIONS

- Senator [Burton](#) appointed Michael Parr, a Sacramento obstetrician and gynecologist, to the Bar's Diversion and Assistance Program Oversight Committee.
- [John Dutra](#) (D-Fremont, San Jose) was elected "Convener" of the Assembly's Democratic Moderate Caucus. Twenty-six of the Assembly's 50 Democrats are members of the Caucus.