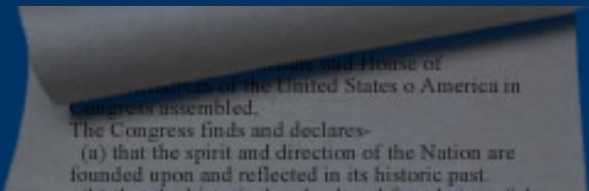


News!

APRIL 16, 2010

VOL IV , No. 12



ARCHITECT OF THE CAPITOL HEARING

On Thursday, the Senate Rules committee held a hearing on Stephen T. Ayers nomination as Architect of the Capitol. He has been serving as Acting for the past three years and also sits as a member of the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation. The hearing included praise for his current successes and no opposition to his nomination. NCSHPO provided support testimony.

“HOME STAR” BILL INTRODUCED IN HOUSE

On Wednesday, Representatives Peter Welch (D-VT), Ed Markey (D-MA), Dennis Cardoza (D-CA) and Vern Ehlers (R-MI) along with Chairman of the House Energy and Commerce Committee, Henry Waxman (D-CA), introduced a bill to provide instant rebates for home energy retrofits (H.R. 5019). This legislation is a version of President Obama’s “Cash for Caulkers” proposal.

This program would provide consumers – through their contractors – a rebate for 50 percent of an efficiency project or up to \$1,500 per retrofits for a total benefit not to exceed \$3,000 (named Silver Star); or, if a whole home is upgraded, a 20 percent rebate where the homeowner could get up to \$3,000 (Gold Star). The bill also includes a rebate for the installation of storm windows on historic homes. The storm window rebate would be capped at \$1,000, allowing for \$50 per storm window for a minimum of 5 windows and a maximum of 12. The rebate also covers labor and materials. This provision is also part of the Senate companion legislation (S.3177).

On Thursday, the Senate Energy and Commerce committee approved the bill but it is unknown when it will go to the House floor.

SENATE SPRING OUTLOOK

Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid (D-NV) sketched out an agenda for the weeks leading up to Memorial Day, saying Tuesday that Democrats hope to pass a financial regulatory reform bill, food safety legislation and a long-term extension of tax breaks and benefits programs. The majority will also push to confirm nominees and will try to take up a campaign-finance measure.

Reid is also trying to figure out when Democrats can (or if) they will turn to climate change and energy legislation, as well as immigration. He expects much of the summer will likely focus on confirmation hearings for President Obama's choice to replace retiring Supreme Court Justice John Paul Stevens.

CONSERVATION TAX EASEMENTS UPDATE

The IRS has removed conservation easements from its “Dirty Dozen” list of abusive transactions. That doesn’t mean that they will stop auditing easements, but, for the first time in years, conservation easements are not specifically mentioned (the new list still includes a category called "abusive donations to charities". The Land Trust Alliance (of which NCSHPO is a member) believes this change stems from a direct result of the dialogue the Alliance has had with the IRS and the progress land trusts have made with improved practices, accreditation and appraisal reform.

MARK YOUR CALENDARS



- July 28-30, 2010 – NCSHPO Summer Board Meeting, Grand Rapids, MI
- November 10-13, 2010 – NCSHPO Winter Board Meeting, San Diego, CA