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ARPA Member Blast January 30th, 2009

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Making The "Biggs" Time



When the ARPA Board revised the strategic plan last March, they instructed ARPA Management to help facilitate meetings between elected officials and the ARPA Board.

With that in mind, Steve invited State Representative Andy Biggs who Chairs the House Infrastructure Committee to address the January Board meeting. The Chairman shared his vision for the legislative Session as well as predictions about the federal stimulus package and provided an update on the State's current budget mess.

Here's some additional information about Mr. Biggs.

Biggs is an Arizona native and has lived in Gilbert with his family for the past 20 years. He is a recovering attorney and is licensed to practice in Arizona, Washington, and New Mexico. He has a bachelor's degree in Asian Studies from BYU, and a JD degree from the U of A. He received a MA from ASU in Political Science and is currently working on a PhD in International Relations at ASU.

Representative Biggs is serving in the State House of Representatives representing Legislative District 22. He is Chairman of the Transportation Committee. He also serves on the Appropriations Committee, the Natural Resources and Public Safety Committee and the Ways and Means Committee.

New Committee Dates

Officers meeting is Feb. 12th.
Concrete Tech. is Feb 10th.
Community Relations and HR
(combined) will be Feb 11th.

♪ Someone's in the Kitchen With Rusty...♪

Senate President Bob Burns has formed a "Kitchen Cabinet"—a small group of advisors who will meet with him every other week during the legislative session.



The cabinet is limited to nine members and includes former legislators and industry experts whom Mr. Burns has worked with for many years.



ARPA is very pleased that APRA Government Relations Director Rusty Bowers as well as Special Projects Coordinator Greg Patterson have been asked to serve on the Cabinet.

ARPA Team Meets with Rep. Jones.



On Thursday, Rusty and Steve together with ARPA members met with Representative Russ Jones -- Vice Chairman of the House Natural Resources and Rural Affairs Committee-- in order to discuss mining and industry issues such as reforming the regulatory process, attracting investment, enhancing state services and creating regulations based on sound science.

With the state facing a \$1.6 billion deficit, ARPA participants voiced support for programs including reclamation, a fee authority bill, safety training programs and alternative approaches to the abandoned mine closure program. Participants also emphasized the importance of maintaining a viable Mine Inspector's office despite the current budget crisis.

The working group also discussed the importance of the Department of Mines and Mineral Resources' promotion of mining, archive custody and educational outreach. Maintaining a strong Department in the face of massive budget cuts is going to be a challenge.

Representative Jones was surprised to learn that the State Land Department—despite being charged with promoting highest and best use of trust lands—currently has over 90 mineral leases pending. Some valuable leases have been pending for as long as 20 years with no action.

The participants agreed to form a Regulatory Review Advisory Committee to recommend eliminating redundant or unnecessary regulations in order to free up the agencies to focus on critical regulatory needs and to allow regulators and the industry to function as efficiently as possible.

Check the ARPA Blog for Updates and a Chance to leave your Comments.

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