House Speaker Tim Armstead Won't Seek Re-Election; Eyes Supreme Court Race

West Virginia House of Delegates Speaker Tim Armstead announced today on MetroNews Talkline that he will not seek re-election to his House seat in 2018.

Armstead has held his Kanawha County seat for 20 years, being appointed in September, 1998 and re-elected to a full term later that year.

He has led the House Republican Caucus since the 2006 Elections, and was elected Speaker of the House in January 2015 after the Republican Party gained its first majority in 83 years when it won 64 of 100 seats in the House of Delegates.

Speaker Armstead told MetroNews' Talkline that he is seriously contemplating a run for the West Virginia Supreme Court of Appeals in 2020. The seats currently held by Justices Menis Ketchum and Margaret Workman will both be up at that time.

West Virginia Chamber President Steve Roberts said, "Speaker Armstead is a good friend and has been a champion of creating a climate that encourages businesses to grow and create jobs. His leadership of the House of Delegates oversaw several major reforms that are leading to job creation to help West Virginia's working families."

To read the MetroNews story about the Speaker's announcement, please click here.
The West Virginia Chamber of Commerce will hold three Legislative Briefing Breakfasts next month for the 2018 Session. These breakfasts give members the opportunity to hear from key legislative leaders on the most pressing issues at the Capitol. Each breakfast is held at the Charleston Marriott-Town Center and begins at 7:45am so that the event is completed before the beginning of the workday. Dates and topics for this year’s series are:

**February 6 - Legislative Leadership Overview**

**February 13 - Natural Gas Development in West Virginia**

**February 20 - Opioids and the State’s Drug Epidemic**

Don't miss out on hearing about these important topics as they progress through the Capitol!

**Register Now!**
Bills Affecting Legislative Redistricting See Action

HB 4002, a bill that requires 100-single member House of Delegates districts following the 2020 census, could be up for passage in the House of Delegates as early as Monday.

West Virginia is one of only ten states that currently use multi-member legislative districts, and one of only two (New Hampshire being the other) that has districts in excess of three members.

The West Virginia Chamber of Commerce has long championed requiring 100 single-member districts for the House of Delegates, as these districts increase government accountability and enhance the principle of ‘one person one vote.’

While HB 4002 would eliminate multi-member House districts in the state, a separate bill that would create an independent commission to draw district lines after the 2020 census is receiving additional attention in a House Judiciary Subcommittee.

HB 2383, which is sponsored by Berkeley County Delegate John Overington, would end the practice of legislators drawing their own district lines following each census. House Judiciary Chairman John Shott has appointed Delegates John Overington (R - Berkeley), Kayla Kessinger (R - Fayette), Mark Zatezalo (R - Hancock), Mike Pushkin (D - Kanawha), and Chad Lovejoy (D - Cabell) to the subcommittee that will formulate HB 2383.

Appeal of Right Legislation Advances to Senate
Yesterday the West Virginia House of Delegates voted unanimously to pass HB 4005, which clarifies that appeals to the West Virginia Supreme Court of Appeals are a matter of right. The vote in the House of Delegates was 98-0 with two members absent.

West Virginia is currently one of a few states that does not have a statutory right of appeal. The West Virginia Supreme Court changed its rules in 2011 to guarantee that every appeal would receive a review by the Court. HB 4005 will essentially codify that rule change.

A similar bill was passed by the House of Delegates last year but did not receive a vote in the Senate.

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**Just Over a Week Left to File for Office!**

Candidate filing for the 2018 Elections concludes next Saturday, January 27, at midnight. Offices on the ballot include one United States Senate seat, all three U.S. House of Representatives seats, 17 of 34 seats in the West Virginia State Senate, and all 100 seats in the West Virginia House of Delegates.

In addition to Congressional and Legislative races, numerous county and municipal offices will be on the ballot.

For more information on how to file for office, please [click here](#).

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**BILLS TO WATCH**

**TO REVIEW THE TEXT OF ANY BILL CLICK THE BILL NUMBER**

- **SB 100** --- Taxing digital goods, products and services
- **SB 269** --- Establishing 2018 Regulatory Reform Act
- **SB 272** --- Relating generally to drug control
- **SB 273** --- Reducing use of opiates
**SB 284** --- Increasing access to career education and workforce training

**SB 300** --- Creating five-year tax credits for businesses locating on post-coal mine sites

**SB 304** --- Relating to authorization and establishment of charter schools

**HB 2028** --- Relating to the venue for suits and other actions against the state

**HB 2379** --- Providing a special method for valuation of certain wireless technology property for property taxes

**HB 2383** --- Providing for the redistricting office of the Joint Committee on Government and Finance to propose redistricting plans during census years

**HB 4002** --- Providing that all delegates shall be elected from one hundred single districts following the United States Census in 2020

**HB 4005** --- Clarifying that appeals to the Supreme Court are a matter of right

**HB 4009** --- State Settlement and Recovered Funds Accountability Act

**HB 4013** --- Clarifying venue in West Virginia state courts as it applies to nonresidents of the state

**SJR 9** --- Just Cut Taxes and Win Amendment (eliminates personal property taxes on industrial equipment and inventory)

**HJR 103** --- Election of West Virginia Board of Education members amendment