



By Tyler MacAfee, AMM Director of Policy & Communications

39th Legislature RESUMES

The 4th session of the 39th Legislature resumed on March 23, 2010. The AMM followed the session closely as there were a couple of issues of great interest to municipalities.

The first was *Bill 3 – The City of Winnipeg Charter Amendment and Municipal Amendment Act (Derelict Buildings)*. Derelict buildings are a real concern in many municipalities and the AMM was pleased to see the introduction of this bill, which grants municipalities the authority to regulate the condition and maintenance of vacant dwellings and non-residential buildings. Municipalities can now act proactively to remove these buildings which are both an eyesore and a safety hazard.

While the process for municipalities to take title of property that is derelict

is onerous, we understand that this is a serious issue and steps must be taken to ensure the owner of the property is aware the municipality has initiated this process. Because of the serious nature of this issue, we can support this process if in the end municipalities can take action to deal with these buildings in their communities.

The second bill of interest this session was *Bill 8 – The Highway Traffic Amendment Act*. Municipalities feel strongly that greater safety precautions must be put in place to protect emergency service providers, and Bill 8 is a step in the right direction. While Bill 8 expands the list of vehicles that drivers must approach with caution, legislative changes alone are not enough. Right now far too many drivers fail to slow down when passing emergency service providers at accident scenes. Bill

8 is certainly a positive step; however its impact may be minimal without increased public awareness of the legal requirement for drivers to take precautions when passing emergency vehicles. Therefore the AMM would like to see an education campaign accompany the changes to Bill 8 so that all drivers in Manitoba are made aware of the need to slow down and protect emergency service providers.

The AMM submitted comments on both of these bills, which were given Royal Assent in the Legislature on June 17. The AMM will continue to monitor the implementation of these bills and will update the membership as new information becomes available.

To see a copy of AMM's submissions on these bills go to www.amm.mb.ca/pol_leg.html 

