



Governor Lawton Chiles delivered his final State of the State speech, opening the annual 60-day session of the Legislature last Tuesday. Besides waxing nostalgic, the Governor asked legislators to spend more taxpayer dollars on health care, children, education, and child abuse. It appears as though the lawmakers will share his priorities.

The Governor reported that jobs are up while unemployment and crime are down. His higher education goals include access for the state's students to the State University System, providing sufficient needs-based scholarships, and retaining Florida's merit scholars in our universities. In his closing remarks, Governor Chiles highlighted his 40 years in public office and even mentioned serving with President D'Alemberte!

Meanwhile, the Legislature is moving at warp speed on some of the most controversial issues of the session. During the first week they overrode the Governor's veto of late-term abortions, presented significant tort reform and heavily debated the means of capital punishment. Additionally, both houses are expected to pass versions of the state's \$45 billion budget within the next few weeks. Legislative leaders are aiming to end the session as much as a week ahead of the scheduled deadline in May.

The House Education Appropriations Committee met last week to release the first version of its budget (see related story). I expect the Senate to do the same this week.

Please feel free to contact me with any concerns or questions, or for copies of bills and their analysis, at 644-4453, or by e-mail, kdaly@govrel.fsu.edu.

Kathleen Daly

House Budget

*Provides access to the State University System for 2,388 FTE's, including 1,716 undergraduates and 672 graduates: \$26.8 million. (SUS calculated plan plus).

*Increases library resources: \$8.7 million.
SUS requested \$8.5 million.

*Restores funding for the operations and maintenance of buildings on campus: \$7.5 million.
SUS requested \$13.3 million.

*Provides \$8 million for distance learning initiatives allocated by the Chancellor to the individual institutions.
SUS requested \$13 million.

*Challenge Grant Program: \$30.4 million.
SUS requested \$30.4 million.

*Facilities Enhancement Challenge Grant Program: \$12.5 million.

*Public/Private Partnerships: \$14.5 million. **SUS requested \$14.5 million.**

*New Scholarship Program to be administered by the BOR: \$.25 million

*Increases tuition by 7% for in-state students and 12.5% for out-of-state students, and used the revenue to fund need-based aid for students (50%), technology (25%), and for discretionary purposes (25%), as determined by the institutions: \$28 million (estimated).
SUS requested an increase of 6.58%.

Session Schedule March 9-13, 1998

Senate:

Monday, March 9 1:30pm-3:00pm
Wednesday, March 11 1:00pm-3:00pm

House:

Thursday, March 12 8:30am-11:00am



Spotlight on Bills

Management Efficiency

Once again, the State University System Management Efficiency bill, **House Bill 755**, by Representative Lee Constantine and Representative Marjorie Turnbull is pending before the Legislature. This important legislation will give universities more flexibility in construction authority, joint use facilities, BOR reporting of OPS employment, purchasing flexibility, SUS employment equity accountability program and more significantly the following administrative areas:

***Property Acquisition**-Will enable the Board of Regents and the 10 state universities to acquire property without the delays currently experienced when working with the Department of Environmental Protection (DEP). It will also allow universities to order their own appraisals and surveys and enter into option agreements to purchase property without appraisals, if deemed necessary. The current system of appraisals can cause up to a six-month delay in a given project.

***Proceeds from Sale of Surplus Properties**-The 1994 Legislature delegated the surplus property function to all state agencies but required that, effective July 1, 1995, the monies from the sale of surplus property be deposited into the general revenue fund. This action reduces or eliminates the funding source for universities to run the surplus property section.

House Bill 755 has a companion bill moving through the Senate, **Senate Bill 1358** sponsored by Senator John Grant (FSU Alumnus). **HB 755** was placed on the House calendar, but was not considered in the first week. **SB 1358** is in the Senate Education Committee.

State University System/Building Designations

PCB CU 98-02, sponsored by the Committee on Colleges and Universities, passed that committee last week. The bill authorizes several state universities to name buildings on their respective campuses including, **the recording facility donated to Florida State University by Echelon International Development Corporation, as "Critchfield Hall"**. The respective universities are authorized to erect suitable markers for the designations.

Sponsored Research and Development

Senator Charles Clary is sponsoring **Committee Substitute/Senate Bill 742** which provides that research and development activities certified as being conducted with a state university will not cause a corporation to become liable for the corporation income tax if it is not otherwise liable. **CS/SB 742** passed favorably as a committee substitute out of the Senate Commerce committee last week. A similar bill in the House, **Committee Substitute/House Bill 3351** by Representative Mike Fasano passed the House Committee on Colleges and Universities last week.

Quote of the Week:

"It(the Legislature) meets for two months, it churns through heaven knows how many documents, a few of them make it into law, and the rest where does it all go? Who can say?"

Tallahassee sculptor Michael D. Jernigan philosophizing on the 1998 Legislative Session
Source: Tallahassee Democrat

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