



As the sixth week of the session came to a close last week, members of the House and Senate Conference Committee finished making their budget decisions and forwarded their recommendations to the chairs of the budget committees in each chamber. Senator Don Sullivan, Chair of the Ways and Means Committee and Representative Rudy Garcia, Chair of the Appropriations Committee are responsible for working out the final budget details by mid-week.

The budget is not the only thing moving along this session. Several important bills are making their way to final passage prior to the May 1 close. The Deferred Retirement Options Program (DROP) "glitch" bill (CS/CS/HB 3131), passed the Senate last week and is awaiting the Governor's signature. This program is meant to provide a way for retirees to accumulate additional savings while continuing employment. Both the House and Senate building-naming bills are awaiting approval from the full House and Senate this week. The Management Efficiency bill, HB755, passed the House and is awaiting a hearing in the full Senate. The Senate companion (CS/SB1358&160) will be heard tomorrow in the Senate Ways and Means Committee.

Legislators left Tallahassee a day early last week to observe the religious holidays. It certainly was a timely and much-needed break. Last Thursday, during debate regarding public-paid private schooling for kindergartners, two House members nearly came to blows. This was the first time since 1991 that a scuffle had erupted on the House floor!

Remember, you can catch all of the action, live, on The Florida Channel (local cable channel 47) Monday through Friday, from 8 a.m. to 6 p.m. As always, feel free to contact me at **644-4453**, or at **kdaly@govrel.fsu.edu** with any comments or questions.

Kathleen Daly

## Budget Update

House and Senate conferees completed their work last Thursday and made substantial progress on closing out the 1998-99 budget. A few issues remain unresolved for the leadership to handle but legislators hope to have the budget finalized by late this week. The tentative agreements include the following, in millions of dollars:

Law Enforcement MHz	
Trunking System	\$4
PO&M Restoration	
(two year phase-in)	\$7.5
Challenge Grants	\$20.8
Library Resources	\$5.2
Enrollment Growth	\$23
Salary enhancement	
(TIP, PEP & Merit)	\$5

The seven-percent tuition increase is expected to be roughly divided into one-third need-based aid, one-third technology and one-third Presidents' discretion.

## Session Schedule April 14-April 17, 1998

### Senate:

Wednesday, April 15  
9:30am-12:30pm

Thursday, April 16  
9:30am-12:30pm

Friday, April 17  
9:30am-1:00pm

### House:

Tuesday, April 14  
8:30am-12:00pm

Wednesday, April 15  
8:30am-12:00pm

Thursday, April 16  
8:30am-12:00pm



# Spotlight on Bills

## The Mathematics and Science Academy Study Commission

**Committee Substitute for Senate Bill 388**, sponsored by **Senator Betty Holzendorf**, establishes a Mathematics and Sciences Study Commission to determine the feasibility of creating a statewide residential mathematics and sciences academy for students in grades 11 and 12. The commission must select a private partner, a State University System partner, a location, and an estimated operating cost for the academy. **CS/SB 388** is now in the Senate Ways and Means Committee. There is a similar House bill, **Committee Substitute for House Bill 1159** by the **House Education Innovation Committee**. **CS/HB 1159** passed as amended on the House floor and has been referred to the Senate Education Committee and the Senate Ways and Means Committee.

## Community Colleges' Bachelor's Degree

**Senate Bill 1110** by the Senate Education Committee creates a pilot program in which three community colleges would conduct bachelor's degree programs in nursing, teacher training, and applied technology. Last week, the Senate Education Committee combined **SB 1110** and **SB 2270** by **Senator John McKay** (FSU alumnus). The **Committee Substitute for Senate Bills 1110 and 2270** would authorize limited baccalaureate degrees in nursing, teacher education, and applied technology at Miami-Dade Community College, South Florida Community College, and Florida Community College at Jacksonville. There is a comparable bill by **Senator Mario Diaz-Balart**, **Senate Bill 1120**, which will be heard this week.

## Quote of the Week:

**"We were having great rhetoric, and a hockey game broke out!"**

-Representative Jim King (FSU alumnus), House Majority Leader in reference to a scuffle that broke out on the House floor last week between Representatives Jorge Rodriguez-Chomat and Carlos Valdes.

*Tallahassee Democrat, April 10, 1998*

## Education/Teacher Preparation Program

Senator Betty Holzendorf and the Senate Education Committee is sponsoring **Committee Substitute for Senate Bill 386**. This bill requires teacher preparation programs at state universities to offer all students the option of an internship with multiple field experiences in an urban or rural disadvantaged area. Beginning in 1999-2000, the internship would provide experiences throughout the academic year. The bill also creates an urban and rural teaching residency for teachers who have had their initial license no more than two years and who have less than five months of full-time equivalency teaching experience. Last Monday, **CS/SB 386** passed out of the Senate Ways and Means Committee favorably with one amendment. It has been placed on the Senate calendar to be heard on the Senate floor. There is a comparable bill in the House, **House Bill 1525** by **Representative Willye Dennis**. **HB 1525** has been referred to the House Education K-12 Committee and Education Appropriations Committee.

## The Florida 2020 Program

**House Bill 4551**, by **Representative Sandy Safley**, creates the Florida 2020 program, a \$6-billion, 20-year comprehensive state program to finance land and water restoration, acquisition and capital improvement projects. Of that total, \$4-billion is reserved for restoration, acquisition and capital improvements to lands and water bodies for conservation, preservation and recreational purposes. The remaining \$2-billion will be equally shared by the State University System and the Florida Community College System for land acquisition, facilities construction and development of telecommunications infrastructure to promote long distance learning. The university and community college systems will develop a three-year priority lists, to be submitted to the Governor and the legislature, for inclusion in the state budget. The program is envisioned to operate in much the same way as the Public Education Capital Outlay (PECO) Program. Details of this "Florida Year 2020 Higher Education Facilities Program" will be worked out over the next two years. **HB 4551** was amended and adopted out of the House General Government Appropriations Committee last week. It is on the agenda in House Environmental Protection Committee to be heard this week. There is a similar bill in the Senate, **Senate Bill 2648** sponsored by **Senator John Laurent** which was filed at the end of March.

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