

LegisLetter

FLORIDA STATE UNIVERSITY GOVERNMENTAL RELATIONS

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Last Thursday, after praising themselves for a job well done, the Legislature voted to chop \$1.3 billion out of the current year's budget.

While the cuts were deeper during this special session than the last one in October, they could have been even worse (see related story). These reductions include \$146 million from health care and social service programs, \$141 million from the criminal justice system and \$639 million from education as a whole. At the same time lawmakers voted to cut these programs, they approved an economic stimulus package, which includes more than \$1 billion in new school and road construction projects, \$20 million for tourism advertising and \$17 million on antiterrorism measures.

Several bills passed the Legislature as well, including House Bill 13C, which gives the K-20 system budget flexibility (see *Spotlight on Bills*).

Because next year requires reapportionment of the Legislature, the regular 2002 Session will begin on January 22 and conclude on March 22. Lawmakers are already warning of more budget cuts in FY2002, as state economists report that the declining tax revenue is expected to continue next year. In the mean time, the Governor will release his 2002-03 recommended budget within the next month. Legislators will then begin crafting next year's budget.

The Governmental Relations Legislative Liaison Committee will meet on Tuesday, January 15th, for a pre-session briefing. And, as always, I will send weekly updates via this newsletter during the regular session. Please feel free to contact me if you have questions or need copies of bills and their analysis. I can be reached at **644-4453** or **kdaly@govrel.fsu.edu**. Have a happy holiday season.

Kathleen

***“We were able to not use a meat ax,
but a sharp knife.”***

—**Senator John McKay**, (R-Bradenton and FSU Alum)
discussing the budget reductions.

Budget Reductions

The State University System took a 6.30 percent general revenue reduction at the conclusion of last week's second special session. The cuts, however, are equitable across each delivery system, and will be managed at the institutional level by each President and Board of Trustees. Florida State University received a 6.07 percent general revenue reduction, after the non-recurring add-backs. The reductions are as follows:

- \$433,000 in library resources
- \$14,091 million to FSU's E&G lump sum
- \$961,057 from the FSU Medical School, a 6.40 percent reduction
- \$39,809 from the FSU Multidisciplinary Educational Services Centers
- \$50,959 from the FSU Autism Center
- \$7,682 from WFSU-FM
- \$1.3 million from all of the public broadcasting stations in Florida. (The cut will be allocated on a prorated basis, to be recommended by the Commissioner of Education. The reduction will not apply to statewide governmental and cultural affairs programming.)

The Legislature also cut \$12 million for the summer Bright Futures scholars, but added proviso language that would require each institution to address the issue for its seniors. Also, proviso language was added allowing each institution to recoup over-collection of tuition funds through June 30, 2002.

Lastly, the economic stimulus package approved by the Legislature added \$4.5 million in PECO funds for FSU.

Spotlight on Bills

Senate Bills 16C, 20C, 22C and 24C each passed the legislature and were approved by the Governor. Collectively, they address public records and security issues:

SB 16C, Public Records/Security Systems by Senator Ginny Brown-Waite (R-Brooksville) expands the definition of "security system plans" currently held in statute to include threat assessment and response plans, emergency evacuation plans, shelter plans, emergency equipment, security manuals and training plans. It provides a public records exemption for organizations that filed plans by the effective date of the bill. It also provides public meetings exemption for portions of a meeting where security plans are discussed.

SB 20C, Public Records/Pharmaceuticals by Senator Ginny Brown-Waite (R-Brooksville) provides a public records exemption for any identifying or descriptive information relating to pharmaceuticals, labs, medical or storage facilities that are managed by the Health Department and designated for use in response to terrorism.

SB 22C, Public Records/Law Enforcement by Senator Ginny Brown-Waite (R-Brooksville) provides a public records exemption for information requests made by law enforcement and for the response given by an agency to such a request.

SB 24C, Domestic Security/Counter-Terrorism by Senator Ginny Brown-Waite (R-Brooksville) assigns to FDLE the

responsibility of coordinating & overseeing responses to acts of terrorism, and designates the agency's executive director as Florida's Chief of Domestic Security Initiatives. It also requires the establishment of regional security task forces to advise the chief on issues such as training, investigations, and appropriate responses to hate crimes that are initiated in response to terrorism.

Other bills presented to the Governor include the following:

SB 44, Intangible Property Tax by Senator Ken Pruitt (R-Port St. Lucie), delays for six months any increases of intangibles tax exemptions. The increase is postponed until July 1, 2003. The bill also authorizes the Department of Revenue to adopt emergency rules to implement the changes.

SB 52C, Florida Building Code by Senator Charlie Clary (R-Destin) postpones to March 1, 2002 the effective date of the new Florida Building Code, as well as the deadline for incorporating the Uniform Code for Public Education Facilities into the Code.

13C, K-20 Funds Flexibility Act by Representative Evelyn Lynn (R-Ormond Beach) provides district school boards with the flexibility to spend, during the 2001-2002 fiscal year, certain categorical and reserved funds that were previously restricted on classroom instruction deemed essential. The categorical funds identified include student transportation, teacher training, teacher

recruitment signing bonuses, and public school technology among others. It also provides flexibility in the use of up to \$446 million in combined non-recurring capital improvement millage revenue and state funds. Some flexibility was also granted to community college and university boards of trustees, allowing them to amend their operating budgets and spend from specific categories if needed in order to meet the institution's financial needs for FY 2001-2002. The bill identifies the categories of Workforce Development, Performance Based Incentives and the Community College Program Fund and requires that the integrity of the categories be maintained.



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