



# LegisLetter

FLORIDA STATE UNIVERSITY GOVERNMENTAL RELATIONS

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Twelve days. That's how much time is left for lawmakers to bridge the huge gaps that divide just about every high-profile issue they've promised to tackle before the scheduled May 2 conclusion of this year's regular 60-day legislative session.

From next year's state budget to reducing K-12 class sizes, the list of differences between House and Senate priorities is so long that a special session is predicted. Governor Jeb Bush, meanwhile, has said that any budget the Legislature passes will be vetoed unless it includes money for bonuses for high-performing K-12 schools.

The House, under its no-new-taxes Republican majority, is opposed to the Senate's suggestion to expand the state's revenue base. The Senate's proposed budget includes about \$1.4 billion in enhancement revenues, while the House budget does not. The Senate spending plan funds the SUS priorities, including enrollment growth, the major-gift program, and restoration of the cuts taken in earlier versions of the budget. The Senate also funds the Governor's priorities with its \$1.4 billion in enhanced revenue. The House budget, on the other hand, contains little, if any, new money for the university system.

While the Senate manages the budget bill in conference this year, they have not yet named conferees or announced a conference schedule. The House named their conferees last week (**see related story**).

With passage of the University Governance constitutional amendment last fall, the Governor appointed a Board of Governors, along with members to the State Board of Education. The Senate Education Committee confirmed all seventeen members of the Board of Governors last week, as well as the Board of Education members. There has been no word yet on when University Boards of Trustees members will be confirmed.

Governor Bush met Friday with all of the Chairs of the SUS trustee boards, to discuss the bare-bones budgets, which slash funding for higher education. These officials expressed concern that such cuts could force steep tuition increases next year, and provide little funding for enrollment growth.

Please feel free to contact me if you have questions about issues that may concern you. I can be reached at (850) 644-4453, or by e-mail at [kdaly@govrel.fsu.edu](mailto:kdaly@govrel.fsu.edu).

## HOUSE CONFEREES APPOINTED

House Speaker **Johnnie Byrd (R.-Plant City)** appointed the following nine budget conferees last week:

### Education

Representative David Simmons, Chair — (R.-Orlando)

Representative Bev Kilmer — (R.-Marianna)

Representative Dennis Baxley — (R.-Ocala, FSU Alum)

Representative Joe Pickens — (R.-Palatka)

Representative Stan Mayfield — (R.-Vero Beach)

Representative Dwight Stansel — (D.-Lake City)

Representative David Mealor — (R.-Orlando)

Representative Rafael Arza — (R.-Miami)

Representative Ray Sansom, alternate — (R.-Pensacola, FSU Alum)

## SESSION SCHEDULE

### SENATE

Wednesday, April 23  
9:00 a.m. - 4:15 p.m.

Thursday, April 24  
9:30 a.m. - 4:15 p.m.

Friday, April 25  
9:30 a.m. - completion of agenda

### HOUSE

Tuesday, April 22  
12:00 noon - 5:00 p.m.

Wednesday, April 23  
10:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.

Thursday, April 24  
10:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.

Friday, April 25  
10:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.

# Spotlight on Bills

## **SB 754 — State Student Financial Assistance Trust Fund by Senator Lisa Carlton (R-Osprey)**

Re-establishes the State Student Financial Assistance Trust Fund within the Education Dept. without alteration. The bill will hold current balances and carry over sources. SB 754 has been passed the Senate and is on the House Special Order Calendar. The House has not filed a similar bill.

## **SB 1164 — Private Property Rights Protection by Comprehensive Planning Committee and Senator Ken Pruitt (R-Port St. Lucie)**

Amends s. 70.001, F.S., the "Bert J. Harris, Jr., Private Property Rights Protection Act." Revises the process for deciding a governmental entity's last decision determining the permissible uses for a property. Allows for the establishment of a law or regulation, however, it does not constitute application of the law or regulation. Allows for a dismissal of sovereign immunity for liability. This amendment is retroactive to May 11, 1995. This bill passed the Senate last week. The House filed similar bill, **HB 113, by Representative Jeff Kottkamp (R-Cape Coral, FSU Alum)** which is now in the Local Government and Veterans' Affairs Committee.

## **SB 2170 — Charter School Districts by Subcommittee on Education Appropriations and Senator Bill Posey (R-Rockledge)**

Requires that if a school district desires to become a charter school district, 50 percent of the district schools must earn "A's" or "B's" and no schools in the district may earn "D's" or "F's." Allows for the renewal of charters provided the districts meet the criteria. The bill passed the Senate Education Committee and is available to be heard by the

full Senate. The House filed similar bill, **HB 1507, by Representative Stan Mayfield (R-Vero Beach)** which is sitting in the House Appropriations Committee.

**SB 1696 —Sales Tax/Box Seat/Skybox/Luxury Box by Senator Bill Posey (R-Rockledge)** Removes the exemption from tax on skybox, luxury box, or other box seats during high school or college football games. This bill passed the Senate last week. There is no companion in the House at this time.

**SB 2062 — Scholarship Funding Tax Credits by Senator Tom Lee (R-Brandon)** Pertaining to K-12; raises the total sum of corporate income tax credits granted to each state during a fiscal year for donation to nonprofit scholarship funding organizations from \$50 million to \$75 million; alters the scholarship totals given per student by the percentage change in the Consumer Price Index. Creates a program for donations to nonprofit scholarship-funding organizations for use by dependent children of military personnel, etc. The bill has been placed on this week's calendar for its second reading. The House has filed the similar bill, **HB 805, by Representative Carey Baker (R-Eustis)** is now in the House Subcommittee on Education Appropriations.

**SB 418 — State Financial Matters by Senator Ken Pruitt (R-Port St. Lucie)** Revises the stipulation regarding Legislative Trust Funds; repeals numerous exemptions to those Trust Funds whose interest had not been swept into the general revenue fund, including the Capitol Improvement Trust Fund. The bill would use the interest earned from specified trust funds and limits interest earnings

that are deposited in trust funds. SB 418 passed the Senate Appropriations Committee last week and is ready to be heard by the full Senate.

**HB 91 — University Buildings and Roads Designation by Representative Ray Sansom (R-Fort Walton Beach, FSU Alum)** Names buildings on several state university campuses for living people. The Bill passed the House Appropriations Committee last week and is ready to be heard by the full House. An identical bill, **SB 2122, by Senator Durell Peaden (R-Crestview)** is now on the Senate Governmental Oversight and Productivity Committee agenda for Tuesday.



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