

# LegisLetter

FLORIDA STATE UNIVERSITY GOVERNMENTAL RELATIONS

Volume Eleven / Number Four • March 28, 2005

*Due to the death of Representative Dave Coley, FSU Day at the Capitol on Tuesday, March 29, 2005 has been cancelled.*

In spite of the fact that the House and Senate recessed last week for most of Thursday and all of Friday, there was much activity during the early part of the third week of the session.

The House Education Appropriations Committee released its Education Budget proposal without much fanfare or discussion (**see related story**). Meanwhile, the Senate Education Appropriations Committee voted to repeal the \$9 million that was advanced last year for a School of Chiropractic at FSU. Additionally, University Governance legislation was briefly discussed on the House floor and is expected to pass to the Senate tomorrow (**see Spotlight on Bills**). Also, committees in both the House and Senate again heard testimony from SUS HR Directors about the problems they've been experiencing with the state-employee personnel system since it was outsourced a few years ago to a private company called Convergys.

On an especially sad note, Representative Dave Coley, a recently elected legislator from Marianna, fell victim to liver cancer last Friday, March 25. He was 43. Dave was a friend and avid supporter of Florida State University who will be missed terribly. Representative Coley's wife and three children are especially in our thoughts and prayers during this difficult time.

As always, please feel free to contact me if you have questions or comments 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).

*Kathleen*

## Budget Update

The House Education Appropriations Committee released their draft budget last week. Below is a comparison between their draft, and that of the Senate. Amendments to both chambers' versions will take place next week, after which each chamber will pass their budget bills, probably during the following week.

### *SUS Enrollment Growth*

**Senate**—\$37 million (about \$3.7 million for FSU)

**House**—\$31.6 million

### *Tuition Policy*

**Senate**—A mandatory 5% across-the-board increase, with flexibility by each university's Board of Trustees to increase out-of-state and graduate tuition up to an additional 5%. (Each 5% increase will generate approximately **\$34.6 million** for SUS schools.)

**House**—A mandatory across-the-board 7.5% increase, with unlimited flexibility above this percentage for graduate and out-of-state tuitions. (A 7.5% increase will generate approximately **\$52 million**.)

### *SUS Challenge Grant Program*

**Senate**—\$44.5 million

**House**—\$41.9 million

### *FSU Medical School*

Both the Senate and House fund the BOG request of **\$3.3 million**.

### *SUS Centers of Excellence*

**Senate**—\$900,000

**House**—\$1 million

Neither the House nor Senate address university salaries, or the \$9 million recommended in the Governor's budget for retirement/health insurance. The budget bills for both chambers, however, will be discussed this week, and it is anticipated that salaries and administered funds will be addressed at that time.

# Spotlight on Bills

## **SPOTLIGHT ON BILLS—UPDATE**

**HB 1001, Governance of the State University System by Representative Dudley Goodlette (R-Naples)**, is set for final passage tomorrow on the House floor without amendments. There is no Senate-companion legislation at this time. (Please see last week's LegisLetter for further information on this bill.)

**SB 1060, Nursing Shortage by Senator Mike Fasano (R-New Port Richey)**, will be heard in the Senate Education Committee today. There are several similar House bills.

**SB 2480, Education, by Senator Evelyn Lynn (R-Ormond Beach)**, will be heard in the Senate Education Committee today. The bill focuses primarily on K-12 reading initiatives and teacher-education proposals, but also codifies the Florida Center for Reading Research at Florida State University. A similar bill, **HB 1737**, is awaiting a hearing in the House Education K-12 Committee.

**SB 778, Per Diem & Travel Expenses, by Senator Al Lawson (D-Tallahassee, FSU Alumnus)**, was reported favorably out of the Governmental Operations Committee last week and is now in the Senate Ways and Means Committee. The bill makes adjustments to the state per diem and travel reimbursement levels. A similar bill in the House, **HB 221 by Representative Lorraine Ausley (D-Tallahassee)**, is now in the House Fiscal Council.

## **SPOTLIGHT ON BILLS**

**SB 378, Higher Education, Florida State University, by Senator J.D. Alexander (R-Lake Wales)**, formerly a shell bill, was amended to repeal the recurring \$9 million for the FSU School of Chiropractic Medicine. The bill reported unanimously out of the Education Appropriations Committee last week and is awaiting a hearing in the Ways and Means Committee. No

House companion has been filed at this time.

**HB 1533, SURE Futures, by Representative Kevin Ambler (R-Tampa)** creates a program to match the contributions of private-sector businesses seeking advanced-degree employees with graduate students who seek employment in the fields of these businesses. The bill provides criteria for these grad students, and these corporate partners, to follow, among which are requirements that the corporate partners donate funds for student scholarships while receiving tax credits for the amounts donated. The bill has been referred to Colleges & Universities and Education Appropriations. An identical Senate bill, **SB 2606**, filed by **Senator Victor Crist (R-Tampa)**, has yet to be heard.

**HB 837, Student & Faculty Academic Freedom by Representative Dennis Baxley (R-Ocala, FSU Alumnus)**, provides a postsecondary student and faculty bill of rights that specifies student, faculty and instructor rights. The bill requires dissemination of copies of the act to state universities and community colleges. The bill reported favorably out of the Choice and Innovation Committee last week and is now in the Colleges and Universities Committee. **Senator Stephen Wise (R-Jacksonville)** has filed an identical bill, **SB 2126**, which has been referred to Senate Education and Judiciary Committees but has yet to be heard.

**SB 1950, Legislative Lobbying by Senator Bill Posey (R-Rockledge)**, provides that it is a conflict of interest for a person registered to lobby the legislature to serve on the governing or advisory body of an entity that receives state funds if that person's position on the said body is subject to gubernatorial or legislative appointment. The bill has been referred to the Ethic and Elections Committee. There is no House Companion at this time.

**HB 1377, Ethics/Public Officers & Employees, by Representative Tim Ryan (D-Dania Beach)**, prohibits state or political subdivision employees from participating in political campaigns during on-duty hours or certain other hours. Additionally, the bill revises post-employment restrictions to apply to OPS temporary employees. The bill reported favorably out of the Governmental Operations Committee. **Senator Bill Posey (R-Rockledge)** filed the Senate companion bill, **SB 1946**, which has been referred to the Ethics and Elections, Judiciary, Governmental Oversight and Productivity and Rules and Calendar Committees but is awaiting its first hearing.

## **SESSION SCHEDULE**

### **SENATE**

**Wednesday, March 30**  
9:00 a.m. to 11:30 a.m.

**Thursday, March 31**  
9:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m.

### **HOUSE**

**Tuesday, March 29**  
10:00 a.m. to 12:00 noon

**Thursday, March 31**  
10:00 a.m. to 12:00 noon



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