



LegisLetter

FLORIDA STATE UNIVERSITY GOVERNMENTAL RELATIONS

Volume Eleven / Number Six • April 11, 2005

The first half of the 2005 Legislative Session is over, and now the hard part begins—the mad dash for the finish line.

The House and Senate budgets passed last Thursday, both without a single dissenting vote. Their budget bills are now ready for conference, the process by which appointed members of each chamber meet to hammer out differences in the respective budgets. Conferees are expected to be announced this week (**see related budget story**).

Two thousand, four hundred and five bills were introduced in the House and Senate prior to the start of the Session. At this mid-point, 233 of them have passed one chamber or another, and only 32 have passed both, and been sent on to the Governor for his signature. Of the bills pertaining to the State University System, all of them are still in play, although the university-governance legislation has passed the House.

Several SUS bills are scheduled for hearings in House and Senate committees this week (**see Spotlight on Bills**). Interestingly (or mercifully, in some cases), these committees are scheduled to complete their work the week after next (the seventh of the session). That creates a sense of urgency among the sponsors of those bills yet to be heard, since after the seventh week, bills left on committee agendas will most likely be “dead” for the session.

You can catch all this frantic action live on the Florida Channel (local cable channel 4), 24 hours a day, Monday through Sunday.

As always, please feel free to contact me if you have questions about specific legislation or the legislative process. I can be reached at (850) 644-4453 or by e-mail at kdaly@govrel.fsu.edu.

Kathleen

FSU Day at the Capitol

FSU Day at the Capitol was to take place on March 29th this year, but because of the memorial services for the late Representative Dave Coley, our day was cancelled out of respect for him, his family and the legislative process. We have rescheduled a modified FSU Day for **Wednesday, April 20**. However, due to the lack of space availability at the capitol, our presence will be limited to recognition and presentations in the House and possibly in the Senate chambers. Coach Mike Martin will give the session opening prayer and President Wetherell will be available on the House floor for a brief presentation. The FSU Pep Band will play and resolutions honoring FSU will be read. You are encouraged and welcome to sit in the gallery on that day, and be recognized as part of the FSU family. Session will begin at 1:00 p.m.

Plans for next year's event are already underway. I hope you will join us when we return in full force during the 2006 Legislative Session.

Thank you for your understanding and continued support of this important event.

Budget Update

The House and Senate budgets passed their respective chambers unanimously last Thursday and are now ready for the conference process. Conferees will most likely be announced later today. Time on both the House and Senate calendars has been blocked off for conferees to meet starting this Friday, and throughout next weekend. The budget is the only bill the Legislature is constitutionally required to pass during the 60-day session.

The House budget is, overall, about \$1 billion larger than the Senate's \$62 bil-

lion spending plan, and includes \$31.3 million in tax cuts. Rather than the tax cuts, however, the Senate's plan would revamp the budgeting process to tackle a projected \$1.3 billion deficit over the next 3 years.

Regardless, the crafting of this year's budget has been easier for both chambers because of an additional \$4 billion in (mostly) non-recurring revenues that became available to lawmakers at the beginning of the session. In addition, the State Revenue Estimating Conference,

which is made up of state economists, is expected to announce an extra \$1 billion (plus) in revenue for this year. These funds, by the way, are considered one-time (or non-recurring) and were largely generated by the sales taxes that resulted from the clean up and rebuilding efforts of last year's hurricanes.

Among the major issues that still need to be resolved in the SUS portion of the House and Senate budgets are tuition policies, PECO, enrollment-growth dollars, salaries and major gift funding.

Spotlight on Bills

SPOTLIGHT ON BILLS— UPDATE

SB 2236, Tuition Rates/State Universities by Senator Lee Constantine (R-Altamonte Springs) requires students to pay 75 percent of the cost per credit hour for those hours in excess of 120 credits applied to baccalaureate degrees. The bill was amended to include a list of exemptions. The bill passed the Government Efficiency Appropriations Committee as amended last week, its second committee of reference, and is awaiting a hearing in the Education Appropriations Committee. It does not have a House companion.

HB 21, Student Financial Assistance by Representative Dick Kravitz (R-Orange Park) The bill prohibits the use of state funds to provide financial assistance to specified foreign students. The bill will be heard in the Education Appropriations Committee today. A similar bill in the Senate, **SB 866 by Senator Mike Haridopolos (R-Melbourne)** is awaiting its first hearing.

HB 119, Higher Education Policy by Representative Juan Zapata (R-Miami) includes provisions to establish the determination of residency for tuition tied to initial enrollment; requires an OPPAGA study and report on current university degree tracking procedures, and outlines requirements of when a non-resident is eligible for reclassification. The bill will be heard today in the Education Appropriations Committee. The companion in the Senate, **SB 226, by Senator Frederica Wilson (D-Miami)** is awaiting a hearing in the Education Appropriations Committee, its final committee of reference.

HB 1001, University Governance by Representative Dudley Goodlette (R-Naples) specifies the constitutional duties of the Board of Governors of the State University System under s.7, art. IX of the State Constitution, specifies the constitutional duties of the Legislature. The bill was amended on the House floor last week to insure current state agency exemp-

tions for the universities remain in effect. The bill passed the House last week and will be heard in the Senate Education Committee on Tuesday. A companion bill, **SB 1920 by Senator Evelyn Lynn (R-Ormond Beach)** will be heard in the Education Committee on Tuesday.

SB 2126, Student and Faculty Academic Freedom by Senator Steve Wise (R-Jacksonville) provides a postsecondary student and faculty academic bill of rights; requires the dissemination of copies of the act to state universities and community colleges. The bill will be heard for the first time on Tuesday in the Education Committee. The House Companion, **HB 837 by Representative Dennis Baxley (R-Ocala, FSU Alumnus)** was discussed in the House Education Council last week, but was not voted out.

HB 517, University Campus Master Plans by Representative Dean Cannon (R-Winter Park) revises items that must be

identified in a campus master plan. Additionally, the bill revises the method for submission of a draft master plan for review; provides additional hearing requirements; provides requirements for filing of a petition by an individual, revises provisions relating to mediation of issues in dispute; provides requirements for signing of a pleading, motion or other paper; provides for sanctions; and, requires the adoption of rules by the university boards of trustees. The bill will be heard in the Education Appropriations Committee today. A similar bill in the Senate, **SB 2614, by Senator Lee Constantine (R-Altamonte Springs)** reported favorably out of the Community Affairs Committee and will be heard in the Education Committee on Tuesday.

SPOTLIGHT ON BILLS

HB 1709, Florida Minimum Wage Act by the Judiciary Committee requires employers to pay certain employees minimum wage and minimum wage to be adjusted annually. The bill was amended and reported favorably in the Economic Development, Trade and Banking Committee. A Similar bill in the Senate, **SB 2638 by Senator J.D. Alexander (R-Lake Wales)** is awaiting its first hearing.

HB 437, University Growth Funding by Representative Frank Attkisson (R-Kissimmee) requires future enrollment growth funds to be appropriated to DOE or to a trust fund to be distributed to public or nonpublic postsecondary education institutions providing instruction in fields vital to the citizens of the state. The bill will be heard for the first time in the Education Appropriations Committee this afternoon. **Senator Stephen Wise (R-Jacksonville) filed SB 1260**, the identical bill in the Senate has not yet been heard.

SB 90 Herbert F. Morgan Building by Senator Al Lawson (D-Tallahassee, FSU Alumnus) designates the FAMU-FSU College of Engineering building as the “Herbert F. Morgan Building.” The bill is on second reading. The identical House bill **HB 219 by Representative Loranne Ausley (D-Tallahassee)** is awaiting its first hearing.

HB 579 Accelerated High School Graduation Options by Representative Bill Proctor

(R-St. Augustine) adds programs to the list of public school choice options and, programs to the list of rigorous academic programs included in the parent guide; and, specifies that dual enrollment courses are creditable toward high school completion. The bill passed the House last week and was ordered enrolled. A similar bill in the Senate, **SB 664 by Senator Charlie Clary (R-Destin)** is waiting to be heard in the Education Appropriations Committee.

SESSION SCHEDULE

HOUSE

Tuesday, April 12
9:00 a.m. to 12:00 noon

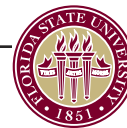
Wednesday, April 13
9:00 a.m. to 12:00 noon

Thursday, April 14
9:00 a.m. to 12:00 noon

SENATE

Wednesday, April 13
10:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.

Thursday, April 14
9:00 a.m. to 12:00 noon



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