

LegisLetter

FLORIDA STATE UNIVERSITY GOVERNMENTAL RELATIONS

Volume Sixteen / Number One • March 1, 2010

Although the 2010 Legislative Session officially opens tomorrow, legislators have been meeting in the interim since last fall.

The budget has always been the focal point of the session, and more so this election year since revenues for the coming fiscal year are projected to be down by as much as \$3.2 billion. And while the state's chief economist reported last month that Florida has probably hit the low point of this recession, it is unlikely we will return to pre-recession revenue levels before 2015.

As the House and Senate attempt to craft a budget with limited resources, the House has engaged in a 15 percent cut exercise and is prioritizing every line item in its budget. Likewise the Senate is exploring high- and low-priority budgeting while predicting "substantial" cuts. (Next year, when the federal stimulus runs dry, the cuts envisioned have already been described as "catastrophic.") Consequently, lawmakers are asking the state universities for faster, better and cheaper ways to deliver the same quality education.

Last month, the Governor released his \$69.2 billion budget recommendations (**see related story**), which include no tuition hikes, no pay raises, no changes in health benefits and \$100 million in additional money to the state university system for an initiative called New Florida. Governor Crist's budget relies on federal Medicaid dollars, the sweeping of state trust funds and passage of a gaming compact, but the Legislature, which has the authority to appropriate, will probably not agree with those funding sources.

Major substantive issues worth watching this session include changes to the Florida Retirement System, the Bright Futures Scholarship Program, the Florida FCAT, and the creation of a jobs bill.

Legislative updates will be distributed via this newsletter throughout the 60-day session. As always, please feel free to contact me if you have questions or would like copies of bills and their analysis. I can be reached at **(850) 644-4453** or **kdaly@fsu.edu**.

Kathleen

Governor's Budget Recommendations

The Governor released the details of his 2010-11 budget recommendation on January 29. Below is a summary of the State University System's recommended budget:

Fixed Capital Outlay Budget:

- \$106.2 M in PECO funding (matches Board request)
- \$48.7 M for PECO formula maintenance (matches Board request)

Operating Budget:

- Includes \$100 M for New Florida allocated to four areas
 - 1) Access to Higher Education - \$88.3 M
 - 2) FIU/UCF Medical Schools - \$4.6 M (matches Board request)
 - 3) IFAS Research/Extension Workload - \$5.8 M
 - 4) NCF Academic & Administrative Infrastructure - \$1.3 M (matches Board request)
- \$5 M for Research Commercialization Grants
- \$11.3 M to replace non-recurring general revenue (matches Board request)
- \$13.2 M for plant operations and maintenance (matches Board request)
- \$18.7 M for FL Retirement System contribution increases
- No base tuition increase; however, assumes maximum 15% tuition differential increase

Following are recommendations specific to FSU:

- College of Medicine, Lottery - \$605,115
- Florida Diagnostic and Learning Resources Center - \$438,138 (GR), \$25,458 (ARRA)
- Autism Program - \$830,019 (GR), \$48,229 (ARRA)
- Public Broadcasting
 - Florida Channel Closed Captioning - \$299,691 (GR), \$59,111 (ARRA)
 - Florida Channel Year Round Coverage - \$1,148,851 (GR), \$226,597 (ARRA)
 - Public Television and Radio Stations - \$5,669,390 (GR), \$1,118,222 (ARRA)
- College of Medicine
 - General Revenue - \$36,132,819
 - Student Fees - \$9,599,134
 - ARRA - \$3,015,147

FSU Day at the Capitol

FSU Day at the Capitol has become a popular tradition during the legislative session and a wonderful opportunity to bring Florida State University to our friends in the Legislature. With this event, we emphasize the University's long and proud heritage and bring attention to the extraordinary accomplishments of students and faculty. This year, FSU Day at the Capitol is scheduled for Tuesday, April 6, 2010.

Please join us for a day filled with informative displays in the plaza level, second and third floor rotundas from 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m., as well as appearances by FSU celebrities, performances by the Pep Band, cheerleaders and the Flying High Circus during the lunch hour in the courtyard beginning at 11:30 a.m. Refreshments will be available for all to enjoy. Please contact Toni Moore at 644-3847 if your department has not yet signed up for a display.

Mark your calendars now! We look forward to seeing you in your Garnet and Gold on April 6.



LEGISLATIVE CONTACT

The ethics law passed in 2005 prohibits state legislators from accepting gifts of any type, including food and drink from a "lobbying entity." Florida State University is a lobbying entity and therefore cannot give legislators anything of value. A number of groups on campus invite legislators to speak at meetings that include lunch or dinner. Because of this law, it is now necessary to let the University's Office of Governmental Relations know when you or your department/organization intend to invite a legislator or member of their staff to campus.

In addition, legislative committee members periodically ask faculty or staff to attend committee meetings, or to formally respond to questions about various issues on behalf of Florida State University. The ethics law, however, makes it imperative that you notify Governmental Relations Assistant Vice President **Kathleen Daly** – at **644-4453** or **kdaly@fsu.edu** - of such requests.

Both of these notifications – a faculty or staff asked to appear before a legislative committee, or a legislator or a member of their staff invited to campus – can also be made by submitting a legislative contact form, which can be found online at www.fsu.edu/~govrel. **Please submit this form prior to appearing before the legislature, or inviting a legislator or legislative staff member to campus.** If you have trouble accessing this form please contact Governmental Relations at 644-4453. Thank you for your cooperation.

SESSION SCHEDULE

SENATE SESSION

Tuesday, March 2, 2010

9:00 a.m. to 10:00 a.m.

5:00 p.m. to 5:15 p.m.

Wednesday, March 3, 2010

1:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m.

HOUSE SESSION

Tuesday, March 2, 2010

10:00 a.m. to 12:00 noon

Thursday, March 4, 2010

4:15 p.m. to 6:00 p.m.

JOINT SESSION

Tuesday, March 2, 2010

5:50 p.m. to 7:00 p.m.

Spotlight on Bills

SB 172, Standards of Conduct, by Senator Chris Smith (D - West Palm Beach, FSU Alum), repeals provisions in law relating to the prohibition against citizen members of the Board of Governors of the State University System or the board of trustees of a local university from having employment or a contractual relationship as a legislative lobbyist. The bill has been referred to the Ethics and Elections, Higher Education and Rules committees. There is no House companion at this time.

HB 279, Data Destruction, by Representative James Frishe (R - Belleair Bluffs), requires all public agencies and private entities that collect personal information to adhere to specified procedures when destroying such information. The bill requires such agencies and entities to maintain copy of such procedures and requires all state agencies to submit sampling of sanitized media to a third-party vendor for verification of data destruction. The bill has been referred to the Governmental Affairs Policy Committee, the Insurance, Business, & Financial Affairs Policy Council, the Full Appropriations Council on Education & Economic Development, and the Economic Development & Community Affairs Policy Council. A similar bill in the Senate, **SB 586** by Senator Mike Fasano (R - New Port Richey) has been referred to the Commerce, Governmental Oversight and Accountability committees, and the Policy & Steering Committee on Ways and Means.

HB 469, Tax on Sales, Use, and Other Transactions, by Representative Anitere Flores (R - Miami), proposes a period during which sales of books, clothing and school supplies is tax exempt. The bill has been referred to Finance & Tax Council and the Economic Development and Community Affairs Policy Council. The identical bill in the Senate, **SB 514** by Senator Mike Fasano (R - New Port Richey) has been referred to the Finance and Tax Policy committee and the Steering Committee on Ways and Means.

HB 505, State Universities, by Representative Robert Schenck (R - Springhill), redefines the term "continuing contract" as it relates to construction costs in order to increase certain cost thresholds. Additionally, the bill authorizes the university boards of trustees to establish renewable energy fee under certain circumstances and limits the use of the fee. The bill establishes a

renewable energy fee committee and provides for referendum on continuing or discontinuing the fee. The bill authorizes university to reestablish fee, etc. The bill has been referred to the State Universities & Private Colleges Policy Committee, the Energy & Utilities Policy Committee, the State Universities and Private Colleges Appropriations Committee, and the Education Policy Council. A similar bill in the Senate, **SB 778** by Senator Lee Constantine (R - Altamonte Springs) was amended in the Higher Education Committee and will go next to the Finance and Tax Committee.

SB 660, Defined Contribution Retirement Program, by Senator Mike Fasano (R - New Port Richey), changes the name of the Public Employee Optional Retirement Program to the Public Employee Retirement Investment Program. The bill limits the option of enrolling in the State Retirement System's defined benefit program or defined contribution program to public employees employed before January 1, 2011. The bill requires public employees employed on or after January 1, 2011 to enroll in the defined contribution program. Additionally, the bill deletes provisions relating to having a choice in retirement plans. There are two similar bills, **SB 1078** by Senator Jeremy Ring (D - Margate), and **HB 413**, by Representative John Wood (R - Haines City, FSU Alum.)

HB 667, Florida Bright Futures Scholarship Program, by Representative John Tobia (R - Melbourne), requires a student to reimburse the educational institution for award amounts received for certain courses dropped by the student or courses from which the student has withdrawn. The bill requires reimbursements to be refunded to the Department of Education and requires an institution to notify the department and student of the amount due within 30 days after the determining the student has dropped or

withdrawn from a course. The bill has been referred to the State Universities & Private Colleges Appropriations committee, the State Universities & Private Colleges Policy committee, and the Education Policy Council. The identical bill in the Senate, **SB 1966** by Senator Carey Baker (R - Eustis) has been referred to the Higher Education and Higher Education Appropriations committees.

HB 699, Florida Bright Futures Scholarship Program, by Representative Steve Precourt (R - Winter Garden), provides that the Bright Futures program shall serve as an incentive to recipients of awards to remain and work in the state. The bill requires repayment of an award unless a student receives credit for repayment by meeting an employment obligation. The bill further specifies terms of employment obligations and conditions for repayment. Additionally, the bill provides for deposit of moneys repaid and use of such moneys. The bill requires that the student provide intent to work in the state for receipt of an initial award. The bill has been referred to the State Universities & Private Colleges Appropriations committee, the State Universities & Private Colleges Policy committee, and the Education Policy Council. There is no senate companion at this time.

SB 1524, State Purchasing/Vehicles, by Senator Ted Deutch (D - Delray Beach), requires state agencies and certain local governments to purchase hybrid, flex-fuel, or biodiesel vehicles if such vehicles are available. The bill requires the Department of Management Services to adopt rules establishing criteria for the purchase of such vehicles. The bill has been referred to the Governmental Oversight and Accountability, Community Affairs, General Government Appropriations committees and the Policy and Steering Committee on Ways and Means. There is no House companion at this time.



THE FLORIDA STATE UNIVERSITY GOVERNMENTAL RELATIONS

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