



# LegisLetter

FLORIDA STATE UNIVERSITY GOVERNMENTAL RELATIONS

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## Governor's Budget Recommendations

Each year the Governor releases his budget recommendations to the Florida Legislature prior to the start of the regular session. Following is a summary of the university system's portion of this year's \$70 billion budget recommendations:

Operating Budget Summary: The Educational and General budget would increase 2.67% over the current year base appropriation, under the Governor's budget. The breakdown is as follows:

- SUS Lottery \$149,393,158
- Education and General Activities — to be distributed by the Board of Governors
  - General Revenue \$1,934,196,771
  - Student and Other Fee Trust Fund \$944,880,538
  - Phosphate Research Trust fund \$7,281,147
- Fixed capital Outlay \$141,000,000
- Maintenance, Repair Renovation & Remodeling \$33,405,495
- University System Concurrency \$13,000,000
- Centers of Excellence \$50,250,000
- University Matching Gift Program and Courtelis Facilities Enhancement Challenge Grant Program \$74,900,000

The Legislature officially convenes the 2008 session tomorrow, and the first action they will take up will be to cut the budget for the current fiscal year...again. Since the close of the 2007 session, state revenues have decreased substantially, which has already led to reductions of approximately \$200,000,000 from the higher education budget.

There is no doubt these budget cuts, along with potentially deeper cuts for the next fiscal year, will have a devastating effect on our university. Many revenue-generating ideas are currently being discussed by legislators and by the Taxation and Budget Reform Commission (TBRC), but nothing has emerged as an easy solution to the problem. The TBRC is a constitutional body that meets once every twenty years to study and potentially change the tax and budget structure of the state. Its members are appointed by the governor and their findings are due out in early May. You can learn more about the TBRC and FSU's involvement with it through the Florida's Financial Disaster link on the university homepage.

Aside from budget issues, there are many bills that could impact higher education in Florida. We will be watching and in some cases amending those proposals as the session advances. Included are proposals pertaining to alternative energy sources, changes to the Bright Futures Scholarship Program, retirement tweaks, and economic development options. The Spotlight on Bills segment of this newsletter will provide updates on these as well as other legislation of interest.

As always, the Florida Channel will provide its signature "gavel to gavel" coverage of the 60-day session, which can be viewed on local cable channel 4. You are also welcome to contact me with any questions and concerns you may have. I can be reached at **(850) 644-4453** or via e-mail at **kdaly@fsu.edu**.

### FSU Specific Budget Issues:

- FSU College of Medicine, Lottery \$3,132
- FSU College of Medicine
  - General Revenue \$41,610,176
  - Student and Other Fee Trust Fund \$7,921,099
- Florida Center for Reading Research \$1,593,600

### PECO

- Utilities/Infrastructure/Capital Renewal/Roofs \$8,500,000
- College of Education Building Expansion \$3,000,000
- Ruby Diamond Renovation \$10,000,000
- Johnston Building Remodeling \$29,200,000
- Nursing/Health Facility \$10,000,000
- FSU Science, Technology, Engineering & Math Center (STEM) \$1,750,000
- Florida Diagnostic & Learning Resources Center \$594,558
- Autism Program \$1,058,766
- Public Broadcasting, Television \$501,907, Radio \$100,750

The Governor does not recommend an increase in university tuition.

The Governor provides \$30,700,000 for salary increases and other pay issues. Each agency will be provided 2 percent of its initial approved salary rate and benefits to develop a unique plan of action to address the critical compensation needs of its workforce. The plan may: provide salary increases to job classifications within an agency that are experiencing excess turnover or recruitment difficulties; provide merit increases or bonus payments to reward initiative, creativity, exceptional productivity, superior work product, teamwork and commitment to the mission of the agency; provide salary equity increases based on the length of service; increases to on-call pay or shift differentials.

Health Insurance would continue at the current rate, under the Governor's recommendations.

# ADDITIONAL BUDGET CUTS *for* FY 2007-08

Due to lower than predicted revenue income for the State, Florida State University and the State University System are facing a second round of budget cuts for the current fiscal year.

Included (at right) is a brief breakdown of the cuts proposed by both the House and Senate. These cuts will be voted on this week, the first week of the 2008 Legislative Session.



*Office of*

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## 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 new 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. The new ethics law, however, makes it imperative that you notify Governmental Relations Assistant Vice President **Kathleen Daly – at 644-4453 or [kdaly@fsu.edu](mailto:kdaly@fsu.edu)** - of such requests.

Both of these notifications – a faculty or staff member has been asked to appear before a legislative committee, or a legislator or a member of their staff will be on campus – can also be made by submitting a Legislative Contact Form, which can be found online at [www.fsu.edu/~govrel](http://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.

- Bright Futures - \$9,000,000
- Centers of Excellence - \$3,960,000
- Performance Based Incentives - \$160,000
- College Reach Out Program - \$136,000
- University Research Commercialization Grant Program - \$80,000
  
- FSU General Revenue - \$4,956,559
- FSU Lottery Funds - \$913,647
- FSU Medical school (GR) - \$699,451
- FSU Florida Diagnostic & Learning Resource Ctr. - \$23,782
- Autism Program – FSU College of Communications - \$42,351
- Public Broadcasting:
  - Public Television & Radio Stations - \$348,202 (reduced proportionally)
  - Florida Channel Yr. Round Coverage - \$70,560
  - Florida Channel Closed Captioning - \$19,406
  - Radio Reading Services for the Blind - \$16,317



## FSU Day at the Capitol

Because of the recent and future cuts to our budget, FSU Day at the Capitol scheduled for April 15, 2008 is cancelled.

While FSU Day is a wonderful time to showcase all that we offer to our students and the citizens of Florida, the state of the economy does not lend itself to such a celebration at this time. We hope that we can resume this tradition next year.

# Spotlight on Bills

**HB 97, State Government Websites by Representative Michael Scionti (D – Tampa, FSU Alum)**, Expands AEIT duties to include strategies for providing information on state Internet portal in English & Spanish by time certain & strategies & timeframes for phasing in deployment of information on state government websites in English & Spanish; requires information on state Internet portal & state government websites to be in English & Spanish by time certain. There is no Senate Companion at this time. The bill has been referred to the Government Efficiency & Accountability Council; Policy & Budget Council; and, the Audit & Performance Committee.

**HB 207, Educator Certification Requirements, by Representative Maria Sachs (D – Delray Beach)**, requires subject area examinations in specified foreign languages for purpose of demonstrating mastery of that subject area knowledge. The bill has been referred to the Schools & Learning Council; Policy & Budget Council and the Education K-12 Committee. The identical bill in the Senate, **SB 1062 by Senator Paula Dockery (R – Lakeland)** was heard and amended in the Education K-12 Committee.

**SB 414, Alternative Energy Center/ Incentive Program by Senator Michael Bennett (R – Bradenton)**, Creates the Florida Alternative Energy Center to promote alternative energy technologies, including alternative fuels and technologies for electrical power plants, electric motor vehicles, energy conservation, distributed generation, advanced transmission methods, and the control of pollution and greenhouse gases, etc. The bill has been referred to the Communications and Public Utilities; Environmental Preservation and Conservation; Commerce; Transportation and Economic Development Appropriations committees. There is no House companion at this time.

**SB 562, Educational Facilities/Building Standards, by Senator Lee Constantine (R – Altamonte Springs)**, requires that educational facilities of a school district, a community college, a university, or the Florida School for the Deaf and the Blind, which cost more than \$100,000, must achieve certain ratings used by the United States Green Building Council's Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design or by the Green Building Initiative. Applies to facility designs that are approved after July 1, 2009, etc. The bill has been referred to Environmental Preservation and Conservation; Education Pre-K - 12; Education Facilities Appropriations committees. There is no House companion at this time.

**SB 316, Biodiesel and Ethanol Fuels/ State Fleet Usage, by Senator Lee Constantine (R – Altamonte Springs)**, establishes standards to increase the use of biodiesel and ethanol in state-owned diesel and flex-fuel. The bill also designates the Florida Dept. of Management Services to provide administrative services and report to the Legislature on the use of ethanol/biodiesel by the state. Additionally, the bill establishes standards for the purchase of biodiesel fuel by school district transportation services. The bill has been referred to the Governmental Operations, Environmental Preservation and Conservation and General Government Appropriations committees. There is no House companion at this time.

**SB 692, Recycling, by Senator Dennis Jones (R – Seminole)** requires all entities operating in the state and receiving state funds, and each public airport, to collect aluminum beverage cans and recyclable plastic and glass from its place of business and to offer those materials for recycling. Affected entities can retain all proceeds generated from the sale of these materials. The bill has been referred to Environmental Preservation and Conservation, Governmental Operations, Commerce and General Government Appropriations

Committees. The identical bill in the house, **HB 301 by Representative Janet Long (D – St. Petersburg)** has been referred to the Environmental Protection Committee.

**SB 420, State Purchasing/Hybrid, Flex-fuel, and Biodiesel 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 also requires the Florida Department of Management Services to adopt rules establishing criteria for the purchase of such vehicles. The bill has been referred to the Environmental Preservation and Conservation, Community Affairs, Governmental Operations and General Government Appropriations committees. There is no House companion at this time.

## SESSION SCHEDULE

### SENATE SESSION

**Tuesday, March 4, 2008**

*11:00 a.m. until completion*

**Thursday, March 6, 2008**

*9:50 a.m. to 2:50 p.m.*

**Friday, March 7, 2008**

*10:00 a.m. until completion*

### HOUSE SESSION

**Tuesday, March 4, 2008**

*11:00 a.m. to 12:00 noon*

**Wednesday, March 5, 2008**

*1:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m.*

**Thursday, March 6, 2008**

*8:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m.*

### JOINT SESSION

**Tuesday, March 4, 2008**

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