



LegisLetter

FLORIDA STATE UNIVERSITY GOVERNMENTAL RELATIONS

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Intensity is building as the clock continues to tick on the 2006 Session. With 32 days remaining in the 60-day session, issues that may or may not pass are becoming more clearly defined. After this week, the committees will have only two more meeting sessions. If a bill is not scheduled for a committee hearing during those sessions, it is almost certainly dead for this year.

Meanwhile, the budget, which is the only piece of legislation the Legislature is constitutionally required to pass, continues to churn through the process. Last week, both the House Fiscal Council and the Senate Ways and Means Committee passed their amended budget plans and sent them on to their next stops. The SUS budget was not changed significantly last week. Both House and Senate budgets will be debated and amended later this week on their respective chamber floors.

The Proposed Governance bill did finally pass out of the House Colleges and Universities Committee last week, with about 50 amendments. It will move on to the House Education Appropriations Committee later this week, where it will probably again be significantly amended. There is still no companion in the Senate. Other bills are moving in one direction or another, but only a few are moving in tandem, including the University naming bills, which will be heard in House and Senate Committees on Tuesday. The bill that would cut off financial aid to those students holding M1 and F1 visas passed the full House, but has not yet had any type of hearing in the Senate. Bills that would change residency guidelines have stalled in the House, but are on the agenda in the Senate **(see Spotlight on Bills)**.

FSU Day at the Capitol was a resounding success once again. The Garnet and Gold festivities were met with enthusiasm and pride **(see related story)**. A sincere thanks to all who participated.

As always, I welcome your comments and questions and appreciate you keeping me informed of your legislative involvements. If I can assist you with copies of legislation and their analysis, please don't hesitate to contact me at **(850) 644-4453** or via e-mail at **kdaly@mailers.fsu.edu**.

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Kathleen

FSU DAY

at the CAPITOL

FSU Day at the Capitol is always a wonderful opportunity for us to showcase the best of Florida State University, and this year was no exception. Last Wednesday Garnet and Gold dominated the Capitol complex. Some of the highlights included Garrett Johnson, Rhodes Scholar and athlete, leading the Pledge of Allegiance and Drew Weatherford, FSU Quarterback, opening the House Session with the prayer. A crowd gathered in the courtyard during the lunch hour as President Wetherell and Gene Deckerhoff, the voice of the Seminoles, recognized our Legislative Alumni on the steps of the Historic Capitol and shared plenty of Seminole spirit.

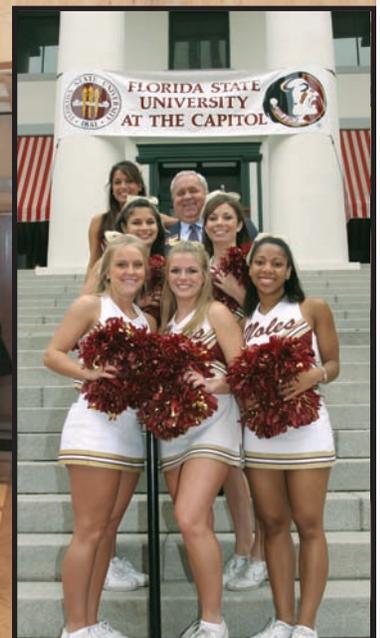
A big thank you goes out to the members of the FSU Pep Band, Flying High Circus and cheerleaders. Thanks also to our administrators, staff, and students for participating and contributing to a very successful Garnet and Golden day.



Gene Deckerhoff, Garrett Johnson, Drew Weatherford and President T.K. Wetherell kick-off FSU Day activities.



FSU Alumni in the Legislature show their Seminole Spirit.



Senator Jim King enjoys FSU Day festivities with Cheerleaders

It was a "GARNET AND GOLDEN" DAY at the STATE CAPITOL

Spotlight on Bills

SB 1024— Deferred Compensation Programs by Senator Lee Constantine (R – Altamonte Springs), revises the term “employee” and authorizes governmental entities, by ordinance, contract agreement, or other documentation, to participate in the state deferred compensation plan, with oversight from the State Financial Officer. Additionally, the bill revises the duties of the State Board of Administration in establishment and management of deferred compensation plans for employees of governmental entities, etc. The bill passed out of the Governmental Oversight and Productivity Committee last week and is now in the General Government Appropriations Committee. A similar bill in the House, **HB 405 by Representative David Mealor (R – Lake Mary)** is now in the Fiscal Council.

HB 581— State Group Insurance Program, by Representative Larry Cretul (R–Gainesville), prohibits funding for benefits granted under said program from being used to provide benefits for any individuals other than enrollees, their spouses and dependent children. The bill prohibits community college and university boards of trustees from establishing benefits programs that use state funding to provide benefits for any individuals other than enrollees, their spouses and dependent children. The bill passed out of the Governmental Operations Committee and is now in the Fiscal Council. The identical bill in the Senate, **SB 1796 by Senator Carey Baker (R– Eustis)** has been referred to Education; Banking and Insurance; Governmental Oversight and Productivity; Ways and Means, but has not yet been heard.

The House companion, **HB 795 by Representative Anitere Flores (R – Miami)** is now in the Education Appropriations committee, awaiting hearings.

UPDATE ON BILLS

PCB HCU1 — University Governance by the House Colleges and Universities Committee, further defines the responsibilities of the Legislature, Board of Governors and Boards of Trustees for the State University System. The bill passed out of the Colleges and Universities committee last week with several amendments and will now go to the Education Committee for further review and amendments. The Senate does not have a bill at this time but is expected to take up the issue later in the session.

SB 428 — Travel Expenses/ Reimbursement by Senator Al Lawson, Jr. (D– Tallahassee, FSU Alum),–revises the per diem, subsistence, and mileage rates for purposes of reimbursement of travel expenses of public officers, employees, and authorized persons. The bill will be heard in the Ways and Means Committee tomorrow. The House companion, **HB 6001 by Representative Marti Coley (R–Marianna, FSU Alum),** passed out of the Fiscal Council last will and will next go to the House floor.

TELEVISION COVERAGE *of the* LEGISLATURE

Live and taped coverage of all the activities of the Legislature can be seen on The Florida Channel, which is available in Leon and Wakulla counties from midnight to 6:00 p.m. daily on FSU4 (local cable channel 4). The Florida Channel is fed by satellite 24 hours a day to cable outlets throughout Florida.

For more information, see WFSU.org.

SESSION SCHEDULE

SENATE SESSION

Wednesday, April 5, 2006

9:00 a.m. to 12:00 noon

Thursday, April 6, 2006

10:00 a.m. to completion

Friday, April 7, 2006

10:00 a.m. to completion (if needed)

HOUSE SESSION

Wednesday, April 5, 2006

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

Thursday, April 6, 2006

9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

Friday, April 7, 2006

9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

HB 1237 — Science & Technology Research by Representative David Mealor (R – Lake Mary), creates the 21st Century Technology, Research, & Scholarship Enhancement Act and creates Fla. Technology, Research, & Scholarship Board within the Board of Governors of the State University System. The bill requires that the board provide recommendations for 21st Century World Class Scholars Program and Centers of Excellence Program. The bill further requires a minimum investment of private funds. The bill passed out of the Economic Development, Trade and Banking Committee and is now in Education Appropriations. A similar bill in the Senate, **SB 2084 by Senator J.D. Alexander (R – Lakeland)** is now in the Commerce and Consumer Services Committee.

SB 366— Resident Status for Tuition Purposes by Senator Frederica Wilson (D – Miami), revises definitions and provides conditions for reclassification as resident for tuition purposes. The bill requires that evidence be provided regarding legal residency and dependent status, and provides duties of institutions of higher education. The bill further updates obsolete terminology, provides additional categories within which students may be classified as residents for tuition purposes, and limits eligibility for award of state financial aid. The bill is now in the Domestic Security Committee.



Office of

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