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FSU Day at the Capitol

Last Tuesday, the Capitol rocked garnet and gold at this year's FSU Day at the Capitol. We want to thank all of the participating departments that took time away from busy schedules to share information about their programs with the legislative community.

Special thanks go to Gene Deckerhoff who served as emcee for all of the noontime activities. The FSU Chiefly Brass, cheerleaders, Golden Girls and circus all entertained the crowd in the Capitol courtyard, while several of our athletic coaches and team members were introduced as were our alumni and friends in the legislature.

This year, the festivities were expanded to include a "Seminole Evening" reception on the 22nd floor of the Capitol Monday night. Legislators, staff, alumni and supporters of FSU gathered and shared some "Seminole spirit" as the sun set over Doak Campbell Stadium in the background.

But these events would not have been possible without the support of our wonderful sponsors. They include: the Seminole Tribe of Florida, Classic Fare Catering by Aramark, Florida Beer Wholesalers Association, Tri-Eagle Sales, Sharkey's Capitol Café, Coca Cola Bottling of Tallahassee, Carl Adams, Capital City Consulting, LLC, Richard Coates, Florida Association of Broadcasters, Lee Hinkle, Larry J. Overton & Associates, Inc., Pennington, Moore, Wilkinson, Bell & Dunbar, P.A., Guy & Delores Spearman, Nancy Black Stewart, TECO Energy, Inc., David R. Custin & Associates, Inc., Ericks Consultants, Inc., FCCI Insurance Group, GMA, Inc., Mabry & Associates, Ron Richmond, Paul Mitchell, Jim Rathbun, S. Curtis Kiser, Mr. & Mrs. Michael Fields, David Pingree, Gary Runyan, and the FSU Alumni Association. Check out pictures of this festive event on our website later this week at www.govrel.fsu.edu.



In what seems to be an annual rite of spring, budget negotiations between the House and Senate broke down last week before they ever really got started. This inability by legislative leaders to strike an initial deal on their differing budgets prompted a postponement of all formal budget talks until after the Senate returns next week.

The state Senate will not be meeting this week (week seven of nine) in observance of the Easter/Passover holidays while the House will only convene on Wednesday and Thursday.

The budget delay has some worried that lawmakers could be forced to extend the session beyond its scheduled close on May 6. **House Speaker Dean Cannon** (R-Winter Park) fueled the session-extension fires with a memo to House members advising them "not to make plans or firm commitments for the period of time immediately following the scheduled end of session."

Initial budget negotiations broke down over how many state dollars should be allocated to higher education and health care, and how to best revamp the state pension plan. **Gov. Scott** added his voice to this debate by saying he would refuse to sign any budget that does not include at least some of the tax cuts recommended in his budget.

Typically, a governor's willingness to push himself into legislators' budget negotiations makes it more difficult for differences to be resolved in a timely fashion. And so far there has been little talk among lawmakers about tax cuts, although **Sen. J.D. Alexander** (R-Lake Wales) said on Friday the Senate may consider rolling back some of the auto-tag fees that were increased two years ago.

In the meantime, lawmakers continue to pass a wealth of substantive legislation through their committees, thereby readying these bills for consideration by each chamber's full assembly before the session ends (see Spotlight on Bills).

Last Tuesday's FSU Day at the Capitol was again a tremendous success! The entire Capitol was awash in garnet and gold – in color and spirit – and all who helped make it so deserve enormous thanks for making the day such a wonderful affair.

Kathleen

FSU Day at the Capitol



Spotlight on Bills

Update on Bills

CS SB 234, Firearms for Senator Greg

Evers (R – Crestview), amends the concealed weapons license law to provide that a person who is in compliance with the concealed carry license requirements and limitations may carry such weapon openly in addition to carrying it in a concealed manner. The bill provides that a person who is licensed to carry a weapon or firearm shall not be prohibited from carrying it in or storing it in a vehicle for lawful purposes. The bill allows the Department of Agricultural and Consumer Services to take the fingerprints that license applicants submit with their applications for licensure, providing applicants with an additional location where their prints can be taken. The bill passed the Senate Budget Committee and the Senate Rules Committee last week. It is now ready to be heard by the full Senate. A similar bill in the House, **CS HB 417 by Representative Chris Dorworth (R – Heathrow)**, reported favorably in the Judiciary Committee, its last committee of reference. The House bill is now ready to be heard by the full House.

CS SB 830, Labor and Employment by Senator John Thrasher (R – Jacksonville, FSU Alum), was amended last week to prohibit labor organizations from spending employee funds on political expenditures or contributions without the employee's written authorization. The CS further proscribes how the political contributions and expenditures will be predicted and accounted for and provides for a refund in certain circumstances. The CS makes the bill apply prospectively to collective bargaining agreements entered into after the effective date. The bill passed the Rules Committee last week. A similar bill in the House, **CS HB 1021 by Representative Chris Dorworth (R – Heathrow)**, is waiting to be heard by the Senate.

CS SB 632, Postsecondary Education by Senator Steve Oelrich (R – Gainesville, FSU Alum) was amended last week to remove

language dealing with campus master plans. The bill reported favorably by the Community Affairs Committee and is now in the Budget Committee. A comparable bill in the House, **HB 7151 by Representative Kelli Stargel (R – Lakeland)**, reported favorably in the Education Committee last week.

CS CS SB 1292, Chief Financial Officer, by Senator J.D. Alexander (R – Lake Wales), was amended in the House to provide a statement of intent by the Legislature that uniform requirements be developed specifically to promote accountability and transparency. The CS/CS removes "citizen support organizations or direct-support organizations" as covered entities. The CS/CS consolidates paragraphs (2) and (3) of the CS into one new paragraph (3) "Reporting Structure" requiring that covered entities implement the applicable chart of accounts during the next fiscal year beginning on or after July 1, 2014. The bill is in returning messages to the Senate.

HB 7151 Postsecondary Education by Representative Kelli Stargel (R – Lakeland), requires the Higher Education Coordinating Council (HECC), with input from the State Board of Education and the Board of Governors, to recommend improvement options and implementation plans to:

- Define the missions of public and nonpublic postsecondary education institutions;
- Establish performance outputs and outcomes designed to meet annual and long-term state goals;
- Evaluate Florida's articulation policies and practices;
- Establish a plan that aligns school district and Florida College System (FCS) workforce development education programs and improve the consistency of workforce education data collection and reporting by colleges and school districts; and
- Recommend a plan for addressing baccalaureate degree authorization and production. The plan shall include:

- An assessment of the potential need to establish comprehensive undergraduate institutions;
- Recommendations regarding a threshold for student enrollment in upper division programs that could trigger changes in governance structure; and
- State funding options and strategies.

The Department of Education, in addition to the Board of Governors, is required to provide administrative support to the HECC. The HECC is required to submit a report by December 31, 2011, that specifically includes recommendations for legislative consideration during the 2012 Legislative Session.

Four-year doctor of medicine degree programs at state universities are required to receive a uniform base level of support per student, as determined annually in the General Appropriations Act. Each medical school is required to report annual expenditures and outcome data to the Board of Governors.

The Department of Education is required to utilize student performance data in subsequent coursework in determining appropriate Advanced Placement (AP), College-Level Examination Program (CLEP), International Baccalaureate (IB), and Advanced International Certificate of Education (AICE) examination scores for the receipt of college credit. The Department must annually identify and publish the minimum scores, maximum credit, and course or courses for which credit is to be awarded.

The exemption from the state university system summer term enrollment requirement for students who have earned 9 or more credits through acceleration mechanisms is repealed.

The provision governing the approval process for additional baccalaureate degrees at FCS institutions offering baccalaureate degree programs for 3 or more years is removed.

The bill reported favorably out of the Education Committee last week.

HB 61, Code of Conduct by Representative Hazelle Rogers (D – Lauderhill), requires

school boards to include an explanation of the responsibilities of each student regarding appropriate dress within their code of student conduct. Additionally, each school board must adopt a dress code policy, which forbids wearing clothing in such a way as to expose underwear or body parts in an indecent or vulgar manner or in a manner that disrupts the orderly learning environment. The bill also provides both an escalating series of disciplinary actions for students who violate the dress code, as well as a requirement for adherence to appropriate dress and other student conduct codes as a prerequisite for participation in interscholastic extracurricular activities. The bill has been placed on the calendar to be heard by the full House. A similar bill in the Senate, **SB 228, by Senator Gary Siplin, (D – Orlando)**, passed out of the Senate and is waiting to be heard in the House.

CS HB 579, Regional Autism Centers by Representative Marti Coley (R – Marianna, FSU Alum), was amended to maintain the protection for records of clients of a regional autism center and for records of the client's family. It removes the public record exemption for records of teachers and other professionals who might receive training at the center. The CS also creates a public record exemption for the identity of a donor or prospective donor to the center who wishes to remain anonymous. The bill is waiting to be heard by the full House. A comparable bill is in the Senate, **SB 1192 by Senator Nan Rich (D – Sunrise)**, was amended last week to:

- Remove the public-records exemption provided for in the bill for records relating to teachers or other professionals who receive services of a regional autism center or participate in the center's activities.
- Authorize release of confidential and exempt records to the State Board of Education or the Board of Governors, without requiring personal identifying information to be abstracted.
- Authorize information contained in the confidential and exempt records to be released to a person engaged in bona fide research if the researcher signs a confidentiality agreement with the center, agrees to maintain confidentiality, and destroys any confidential information after the conclusion of the research.
- Make personal identifying information of a financial donor or prospective financial donor to the regional autism center confidential and exempt.

- Provide a public necessity statement for the public-records exemption for the personal identifying information of a financial donor. The bill reported favorably by the Governmental Oversight and Accountability Committee.

HB 331, Firesafety by Representative Mike Weinstein (R – Orange Park, FSU Alum), clarifies the role of the State Fire Marshal in firesafety inspections of Florida's educational facilities and streamlines the inspection and enforcement practices at the state and local levels. Specifically, the bill:

- Aligns laws governing the State Fire Marshal with educational laws governing firesafety inspections on educational property;
- Abolishes the classification of the special state firesafety inspector, leaves intact the classification of firesafety inspector, and provides for a contingent grandfathering of existing special state firesafety inspectors;
- Requires uniform firesafety standards and an alternate system to be governed by firesafety inspectors certified by the State Fire Marshal;
- Reduces the number of mandatory annual inspections at educational facilities from two to one, and provides for the inspection report to be distributed at the local level only;
- Clarifies the firesafety inspection process for charter schools and for public colleges;
- Requires all public education boards to use only certified firesafety inspectors and other inspectors who have been certified by the State Fire Marshal in monitoring compliance with the Florida Building Code, the Florida Fire Prevention Code, and the State Requirements for Educational Facilities; and
- Requires a public education board to submit for approval the site plan for new construction to the local entity providing fire-protection services to the facility, and outlines the compliance process.

The bill reported favorably by the State Affairs



THE FLORIDA STATE UNIVERSITY GOVERNMENTAL RELATIONS

Kathleen M. Daly, *Assistant Vice President*
Toni Moore, *Program Coordinator*
Chris Adcock, *Office Administrator*

SESSION SCHEDULE

SENATE SESSION

No Session Scheduled

HOUSE SESSION

Wednesday, April 20, 2011
5:45 p.m. to 10:00 p.m.

Thursday, April 21, 2011
2:30 a.m. to 7:00 p.m.

Committee last week and has been placed on the calendar to be heard by the full House. The identical bill in the Senate, SB 534 by Senator Stephen Wise (R – Jacksonville) reported favorably by the Higher Education Committee and is now in the Budget Committee.

HB 599, Uniform Prudent Management of Institutional Funds by Representative Kathleen Passidomo (R – Naples), was amended last week to:

- Provide that funds administered by the State Board of Administration are not subject to the provisions of this bill.
- Clarify that the circuit court for the circuit in which an institution is located is the appropriate court to handle requests for changes to restrictions. It removed the requirement that the Attorney General be provided an opportunity to respond to requests for modifications.
- Remove the requirement that the Attorney General approve requests to release or modify restrictions for funds with a value of \$100,000 to \$250,000.
- Change the effective date to July 1, 2012. The bill reported favorably by the Civil Justice Committee and is scheduled to be heard in the Appropriations Committee on Thursday.