



LegisLetter

FLORIDA STATE UNIVERSITY GOVERNMENTAL RELATIONS

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Florida State University came out of the 2014 Legislative Session on top, with Gov. Rick Scott signing a state budget that supports the university's priorities.

These include continuation of pre-eminence funding and increased levels of funding of university system-wide performance metrics, support for building maintenance and construction of the Earth, Ocean and Atmospheric Science Building and enhanced support for the university's student-veterans.

All in all we had a highly successful legislative session. Our pre-session goals were met and the governor didn't veto any FSU projects, securing a 7.3% increase in base funding.

We would like to express our gratitude for the support received from the Legislative Liaison Committee members. These important members of our team contributed much hard work and patience during the 2014 Legislative Session.

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2014 Legislative Priorities and Outcomes

Each year, Florida State University administrators identify priorities determined to be vital to the operation and growth of the university. Below were the top three priorities for the 2014 Legislative Session, which began on March 4th and ended on May 5th. Session outcomes are listed after each priority.

1. Support for the continuation of preeminence performance funding – \$15 million

Last session the legislature passed SB 1076, which established performance standards state universities need to meet in order to be granted preeminent status. Currently, only FSU and UF meet those criteria. Florida State University's annual base budget is supplemented by \$15 million, but additional preeminence funds are requested. Additional system metrics are also in development and are tied to separate performance funds. This funding will also be a priority.

Outcome: The Legislature included an additional \$5 million, on top of the \$15 million for preeminence to Florida State University for a total of \$20 million in recurring preeminence funds annually. In addition, \$200 million in performance funds, tied to a separate set of BOG prepared metrics passed the legislature for the State University System. Performance funds total an additional \$21 million of new revenue for Florida State University this fiscal year.

2. Support facilities funding

New facilities, renovations, and the expansion of existing facilities, as well as funding for general maintenance, has fallen short of the university's needs because of diminishing Public Education Capital Outlay (PECO) funds, enrollment and programmatic growth, and the impact of the recession. To address these critical needs, state universities have established the "Hard Hats for Higher Education" campaign. This initiative will involve both fiscal and policy issues, including requests for non-recurring dollars for priority projects and building-maintenance needs, legislation that gives universities more financing flexibility through public/private partnerships, and addressing the backlog of private gifts for educational facilities that qualify for state matching grants. The top three projects on FSU's priority list are:

1. FAMU-FSU College of Engineering III -- This request involves a joint-use project between Florida State University and Florida A&M University that will provide approximately 75,000 sq. ft. of space for the Colleges operations. \$15 million requested.

Outcome: \$10,000,000 appropriated for this building.

2. EOAS (Earth, Ocean and Atmospheric Science) Building -- The two-phased EOAS complex will be the focus of earth, ocean and atmospheric sciences. The idea is to create an environment where earth science disciplines such as these can interact in a collaborative effort to teach, conduct research, and public service. The facility will provide space primarily for classroom/teaching lab, study, research lab, administrative and academic support functions. \$30 million requested.

Outcome: \$20,000,000 appropriated for this building.

3. Building Maintenance – The University's utility systems, infrastructure, and physical plant continue to be in need of renovation and expansion to keep pace with the growth of the campus population.

Outcome: \$5,681,291 appropriated to FSU. Additionally, the legislature passed within the larger tax package legislation, an initiative that will fortify the current Public Education Capitol Outlay (PECO) trust fund over the next three years. The PECO trust fund money is earmarked for the building, renovation and maintenance of education facilities.

4. Support for veteran initiatives

In its ongoing effort to be the most veteran-friendly university in the nation, Florida State has taken the lead in advocating for in-state tuition for veterans, regardless of their state of residency. These efforts were launched at a

Capitol press conference during September’s interim committee meetings. In addition to former FSU President Eric Barron, the press conference included Student Body President Rosie Contreras and current student-veteran Andrew Wright Sloan.

Outcome: The first bill to pass the 2014 Legislative Session was HB 7015 that creates the “Congressman C.W. Bill Young Veteran Tuition Waiver Program,” which waives out-of-state fees for honorably discharged veterans of the United States Armed Forces, the United States Reserve Forces, and the National Guard. The bill also appropriates \$5 million in recurring funds to the Florida Department of Military Affairs to pay the tuition and fees for certain deployed Florida National Guard members at a state university or Florida College System institution; and \$250,000 in nonrecurring funds for information technology upgrades to administer this program. Additionally, the bill revises Florida’s veterans’ preference in employment statutes to include all veterans, and not just wartime and disabled veterans, as well as members of the Florida National Guard and the United States Armed Forces Reserves.

The bill appropriates a total of \$26.55 million in General Revenue for tuition assistance and its administration, base buffering, and armory renovations.

2014-2015 Quick Budget Reference Guide HB 5001

Page	Description		Line Item
	Operating Budget		
42	General Revenue	\$251,210,215	143
	Included in the Base:		
	American Legion Boys and Girls State Housing	\$100,000 NR	
	Campus Compact	\$200,000 NR	
	Pepper Center for Long Term Care	\$500,000 R	
	Health Equity Research Institute	\$400,000 NR	
	Florida Institute for Child Welfare	\$1,000,000 R	
	*College of Law Scholarships	\$2,000,000 R/NR	
	STEM Enhancement	\$2,500,000 R	
	Endowed Professorship	\$600,000 R	
	Learning Systems Institute (SB 850)	\$500,000 R	
4	Preeminence – Additional \$5,000,000 =	\$20,000,000	18
43	Lottery	\$39,510,136	143

Page	Description		Line Item
44	Student and Other Fees	\$227,550,703	151
	Student Financial Assistance	\$1,467,667	
43	SUS Performance Based Incentive	\$200,000,000	143
	FSU's portion of Performance Incentive – Includes \$10,700,000 from the base	\$31,700,000	
<hr/>			
College of Medicine			
44	General Revenue	\$34,320,985	147
5	Lottery	\$605,115	22
45	Student and Other Fees	\$11,572,716	147
94	FSU – College of Medicine – Immokalee	\$300,000 NR	461
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6	PECO		
	SUS FCO – Maintenance, Repair, Renovation, and Remodeling	\$37,649,378	25
	FSU – Maintenance, Repair, Renovation, and Remodeling	\$5,681,291	28
8	FSU Critical Deferred Maintenance	\$2,698,731	
	FAMU/FSU College of Engineering. Joint-Use Facility	\$10,000,000	
	Earth Ocean Atmospheric Science Building	\$20,000,000	
<hr/>			
7	SUS Lab School – PECO	\$4,798,454	26
	Proviso: ...shall be distributed among the lab schools based upon full-time equivalent student membership		
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9	WFSU-TV/FM Tower Renovation – PECO	\$115,000	32
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15	Florida National Merit Scholars Incentive Program	\$2,870,820	70C
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16	SUS – Honorably Discharged Graduate Assistance/GAP	\$1,000,000	75
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26	Performance Adjustments – Lab Schools		100A
	Proviso: ...shall be provided to each of the following: FSU Broward Lab School	\$50,000	
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27	Florida Diagnostic and Learning Resource Center		102
	General Revenue – FSU	\$450,000	

Page	Description		Line Item
27	Autism/CARD – FSU College of Medicine		
	General Revenue	\$1,267,477	
30	Communication/Autism Navigator – FSU	\$2,600,000 R	112
32	Public Broadcasting		119
	Statewide Gov. & Cultural Affairs Programming	\$497,522	
	Florida Channel Closed Captioning – GR	\$340,862	
	Florida Channel Year Round Coverage – GR + Proviso	\$2,272,414	
	FSU – Public Television	\$307,447	
	FSU – Public Radio Stations	\$100,000	
	FSU – Satellite Transponder	\$800,000	
	Proviso... From the funds provided in Specific Appropriation 119, "Governmental Affairs for Public Television" shall be produced by the same contractor selected by the Legislature to produce "The Florida Channel."		
43	Performance Incentives	\$200,000,000	143
	Proviso ... From the \$200,000,000, which includes \$100,000,000 new funding and \$100,000,000 redistributed from the base, for State University Performance Based Incentives in Specific Appropriation 143 from the General Revenue Fund, the Board of Governors shall allocate all of such appropriated funds pursuant to the performance funding model approved by the board on January 16, 2014, subject to the following modification:		
	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. All universities eligible for new funding shall have their base funding, including the performance funds allocated by the Board during 2013-2014, to be restored as provided in the Board of Governors' model; and 2. All universities that failed to meet the board's benchmarks for new funding shall submit a plan to the Board of Governors that specifies how their base funding, including the performance funds allocated by the Board during 2013-2014, will be expended to improve upon the metrics that disqualified the universities from receiving new funding. 		
46	Contracted Services – FAMU/FSU College of Engineering	\$500,000	159
	Proviso ... \$500,000 is provided to the Board of Governors for the procurement, no later than July 1, 2014, of an academic		

Page	Description		Line Item
	<p>feasibility analysis by an independent, non-Florida-based organization of options relating to separation of the FAMU-FSU College of Engineering with the goal of achieving world class engineering education opportunities for students in both universities.</p> <p>The study shall examine the pros and cons of:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Maintaining the status quo collaboration between the two universities, including an examination of the original mission. 2. Developing differentiated engineering programs at each university. <p>The study shall include a cost-benefit analysis of each option analyzed in the context of Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, and U.S. v. Fordice, 505 U.S. 717 (1992) and other United States Supreme Court opinions interpreting those provisions. The study shall be completed no later than January 1, 2015, and the Board of Governors shall make its decision based on the study no later than March 1, 2015. If, based on the analysis, the Board of Governors decides that a non-status quo option should be implemented, the Board of Governors shall submit its funding request to the Legislature.</p>		
322	Florida Catastrophic Storm Risk Management Center	\$1,500,000	2447
326	Proviso ... may be utilized to promote and enhance collaborative research among State Universities. The Florida Public Hurricane Loss Model located at Florida International University may consult with the private sector and the Florida Catastrophic Storm Risk Management Center...	\$632,639	2492
326	<p>Enhancements to Public Hurricane Loss Model – Proviso...</p> <p>FIU shall update the Florida Public Hurricane Loss Model in Coordination with the Office of Insurance Regulation; the Division of Emergency Management; the Florida Catastrophic Storm Risk Management Center, The Center for Ocean-Atmospheric Prediction Studies, and the Meteorology Department at FSU.</p>	\$1,543,300	2492A
401	<p>State Health Insurance Plans and Benefits – Proviso</p> <p><i>State Paid Premiums</i></p> <p>...For coverage period beginning August 1, 2014, the state share shall continue at the current rate...</p>		Section 8
404	Proviso... Each state agency, at the discretion of the agency head, may expend funds provided in this act for bar dues and...		Section 8

Page	Description	Line Item
	...for legal education courses for employees who are required to be a member of the Florida Bar as a condition of employment.	
406	<p>Proviso... Facilities may be constructed or acquired from non-appropriated sources, which upon completion will require general revenue funds to operate.</p> <p>Florida State University – Postal Services/Receiving, Warehouse-type space, 15,000 gsf. Located on the south side of the main campus.</p>	Section 11

Note: Page numbers are in correlation with the printed page numbers, there may be some variation from the online page numbers.
The budget may be found at myfloridahouse.gov

* Half Non-Recurring **(NR)**
Half Recurring **(R)**



BILLS THAT PASSED

HB 5101 – Education Funding by Representative Erik Fresen (R – Miami, FSU Alum), a budget conforming bill that:

- Requires a portion of all revenues collected from gross receipts taxes be deposited into a separate account within the Public Education Capital Outlay and Debt Service Trust Fund to provide for the timely payment of principal and interest on bonds and a portion to be deposited into an account for principal payments.
- Prohibits the Florida College System from approving baccalaureate degree program proposals for the period of March 31, 2014 through May 31, 2015.
- Requires the Commissioner of Education to oversee a plan for establishing digital classrooms and requires the Office of Technology and Information Services in the Department of Education to develop a plan for establishing digital classrooms.
- Revises eligibility requirements for developmental research schools to receive the sparsity supplement.
- Revises the mission and goals of New College of Florida and provides for a master's degree program in data science and analytics at New College of Florida;
- Establishes the Florida Center for Cybersecurity within the University of South Florida;
- Establishes the Florida Academic Library Services Cooperative at the University of West Florida. The bill authorizes the university to hire a director for the cooperative and submit an annual report to the Legislature regarding the cooperative.
- Creates the Complete Florida Plus Program at the University of West Florida;
- Establishes the Complete Florida Degree Initiative requiring the program to develop and manage a catalog of distance learning courses, make online services and support available on a statewide basis.
- Requires the University of West Florida to submit an annual report

to the Legislature regarding the program.

- Requires the Northwest Regional Data Center to provide data center services to support the catalog and the statewide advising services.
- Provides for the transfer of the Florida Virtual Campus resources, agreements, and contracts to the University of West Florida.
- Requires the Articulation Coordinating Committee to make recommendations relating to an online system for collecting data regarding requests for transfer of credit.
- Requires schools to provide students in grades K-12 opportunities for receiving computer science and technology instruction.
- Revises provisions relating to dual enrollment articulation agreements, postsecondary institutions participating in dual enrollment programs, and funding for dual enrollment.
- Restricts the Board of Trustees of St. Petersburg College from establishing baccalaureate degree programs until May 31, 2015.
- Requires public postsecondary institutions to provide a website link to the distance learning catalog under certain circumstances.
- Revises provisions of the Rosewood Family Scholarship Program;
- Creates the Florida National Merit Scholar Incentive Program and provides student eligibility requirements and the amount of incentive awards.
- Revises the requirements for the supplemental academic instruction categorical fund and the research-based reading instruction allocation.
- Creates the Florida digital classrooms allocation to support efforts to improve

student performance outcomes by integrating technology in classroom teaching and learning and requires school districts to develop a digital classrooms plan.

- Authorizes the capital outlay millage levy to be used for a district's digital classrooms plan.

CHAPTER LAW 2014-56, EFFECTIVE JULY 1, 2014 UNLESS OTHERWISE INDICATED.

HB 433 – Teacher Certification by Representative Ross Spano (R – Riverview, FSU Alum),

states that beginning on July 1, 2014, a school district may assign a newly hired teacher to a “D” or “F” school if the individual has received an effective or highly effective rating in the immediate prior year’s performance evaluation, has successfully completed or is enrolled in a teacher preparation program specified in current law or a teacher prep program specified in State Board of Education rule, with two years of high quality mentoring during the first 2 years of employment.

The term “mentoring” includes the use of student achievement data combined with at least monthly observations to improve the educator’s effectiveness in improving student outcomes. Mentoring may be provided by a school district, a statutorily approved teacher preparation program’ or a teacher preparation program specified in State Board of Education rule.

The bill re-states the methods by which a candidate for educator certification may demonstrate mastery of subject area knowledge, including passage of a Florida-developed subject area examination or a standardized examination specified by rule. The bill also allows a candidate to demonstrate mastery of general knowledge by achieving passing scores, as identified by the State Board of Education (SBE) in rule, on a national or international examination that tests comparable content

and relevant standards in verbal, analytical writing, and quantitative reasoning skills. In addition, the bill specifies certain requirements regarding demonstration of mastery of professional preparation and education competence.

The bill repeals a provision requiring a longitudinal study comparing the performance of teachers who earned certificates through certain specified “routes.” The study has been completed.

The bill allows candidates to renew a subject area specialization by passage of a Florida-developed subject area examination or a standardized examination specified by rule. The SBE must adopt rules that would expand training for renewal of professional certificates in areas which require training in the instruction of students with disabilities, allowing such candidates to “bank” excess credits for use in subsequent certificate renewals. The bill also requires the SBE to adopt rules specifying certain requirements for reinstatement of a professional certificate.

The bill establishes requirements for instructional personnel who supervise or direct teacher preparation students during field experience courses or internships in another state or on a U.S. military base outside the U.S. through a Florida online or distance program. Instructional personnel in another state must have received “clinical educator” training or its equivalent in that state, hold a valid professional certificate issued by that state, and have at least three years of teaching experience in prekindergarten through grade 12. Instructional personnel on a U.S. military base outside the U.S. must have received “clinical educator” training or its equivalent; hold a valid professional certificate issued by a state, U.S. territory, or the Department of Defense; and have at least 3 years teaching experience in prekindergarten through grade 12.

CHAPTER 2014-32, EFFECTIVE JULY 1, 2014.

HB 851 – Postsecondary Tuition and Fees by Representative Jeanette Nunez (R – Miami), revises provisions relating to the determination of resident status for tuition purposes.

The bill provides that a United States citizen who is a dependent child may not be denied classification as a resident for tuition purposes based solely upon the immigration status of his or her parent. It amends the definitions of “dependent child” and “parent” regarding establishing residency for tuition purposes.

The bill clarifies that students who are eligible for specific tuition exemptions or waivers are classified as residents for tuition purposes.

The bill exempts the following types of students from the payment of out-of-state fees:

- Veterans of the United States Armed Forces, including reserve components, who physically reside in Florida while enrolled in a Florida postsecondary institution; and
- Students who attend a Florida high school for 3 consecutive years and enroll in a postsecondary institution within 24 months after graduation, provided they submit their high school transcript as documentary evidence of attendance and graduation.

Students who are not required to pay out-of-state fees under the new provisions may be reported for purposes of state funding.

Additionally, the bill eliminates the automatic annual rate of inflation increases currently authorized for state universities, Florida colleges, and workforce education programs if no other tuition increases are stated in the general appropriations act.

The bill also reduces the rate at

which only a preeminent institution may request to increase their tuition differential to the Board of Governors from 15% to 6%. The bill specifies that the tuition differential may be increased if the university meets or exceeds performance standard targets for that university established annually by the Board of Governors for the following preeminent performance standards, amounting to no more than a 2% increase in the tuition differential for each performance standard:

1. An increase in the 6-year graduation rate for full-time, first-time-in-college students, as reported annually to the Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System.
2. An increase in the total annual research expenditures.
3. An increase in the total patents awarded by the United States Patent and Trademark Office for the most recent years.

Finally, the bill clarifies the maximum amount a university may be paid by a prepaid tuition contract.

CHAPTER LAW 2014-62, EFFECTIVE JULY 1, 2014.

HB 993 – Public Records/Animal Researchers at Public Research Facilities, by Representative Travis Cummings (R – Orange Park), creates a public records exemption for personal identifying information of a person employed by, under contract with, or volunteering for a public research facility, including a state university, that conducts animal research or is engaged in activities related to animal research. Such information is exempt from public records requirements when the information is contained in the following records:

- Animal records, including animal care and treatment records.

- Research protocols and approvals.
- Purchase and billing records related to animal research or activities.
- Animal care and committee records.
- Facility and laboratory records related to animal research or activities.

The bill provides for retroactive application of the public record exemption. The bill passed the Legislature last week and will go to the Governor for signature.

CHAPTER 2014-37, EFFECTIVE JULY 1, 2014.

HB 115 – Public Meetings/University Direct-Support Organization by Representative Cary Pigman (R – Sebring), creates a public meeting exemption for any portion of a meeting of the board of directors of the DSO, or of a committee of the DSO, in which the board or committee discusses a proposal seeking research funding from the DSO or a plan or program for either initiating or supporting research. The bill passed the Legislature last week and will go to the Governor for signature.

CHAPTER 2014-27, EFFECTIVE OCTOBER 1, 2014.

SB 646 – Postsecondary Education Records and Applicant Records by Senator Bill Montford (D – Tallahassee, FSU Alum), continues the current public records exemption for a student’s education records and an applicant’s records at a public postsecondary educational institution by removing the repeal date. The exemption was scheduled to repeal on October 2, 2014, without the passage of this legislation.

CHAPTER 2014-11, EFFECTIVE OCTOBER 1, 2014.

SB 1036 – Nursing Education Programs by Senator Denise

Grimsley (R – Sebring), was amended last week, the amendment:

- Requires a person who fails to take the licensure examination within 6 months after graduation to complete an examination preparatory class that is approved by the Board of Nursing. The bill, as passed by the Senate, required the class after a 1-year delay.
- Prohibits the use of state or federal funds to pay for the prep class.
- Requires the graduate passage rate to be calculated based on first-time test takers who take the examination within 6 months of graduation.
- Requires an approved program to require a graduate who does not take the exam within 6 months of graduation to enroll in a prep class.
- Requires the plan of remediation for a program that is placed on probation to include specific benchmarks to identify progress toward the required passage rate.
- Authorizes the Board of Nursing to extend a program's probationary period for 1 year if the program is meeting a majority of the benchmarks.
- Extends the implementation study by 5 years to January 30, 2020.

The amendment retains provisions from the earlier bill related to deadlines for programs to become accredited; the definitions of "clinical training" and "practice of practical nursing"; continuing education for nurses with specialty certification; clinical training location; passage rates for students transferring from a closed program; and rulemaking authority of the Board of Nursing.

CHAPTER LAW 2014-92, EFFECTIVE JULY 1, 2014.

HB 953 – State Contracting by Representative Kathleen

Peters (R – St. Petersburg), requires state agencies to consider the prior relevant experience of a vendor when evaluating the responses to a request for proposal or invitation to negotiate. Currently, agencies may consider such prior relevant experience, but agencies are not required to do so.

CHAPTER LAW 2014-135, EFFECTIVE JULY 1, 2014.

HB 7015 -- Military and Veteran Support by Representative Jimmie Smith (R – Lecanto), creates the "Congressman C.W. Bill Young Veteran Tuition Waiver Program," which waives out-of-state fees for honorably discharged veterans of the United States Armed Forces, the United States Reserve Forces, and the National Guard. The bill also appropriates \$5 million in recurring funds to the Florida Department of Military Affairs to pay the tuition and fees for certain deployed Florida National Guard members at a state university or Florida College System institution; and \$250,000 in nonrecurring funds for information technology upgrades to administer this program. Additionally, the bill revises Florida's veterans' preference in employment statutes to include all veterans, and not just wartime and disabled veterans, as well as members of the Florida National Guard and the United States Armed Forces Reserves.

The bill appropriates a total of \$26.55 million in General Revenue for tuition assistance and its administration, base buffering, and armory renovations.

CHAPTER 2014-1, EFFECTIVE JULY 1, 2014.

HB 337 – Florida Teacher Classroom Supply Assistance Program by Representative Erik Fresen (R – Miami, FSU Alum), provides funding for teachers to purchase supplies and materials for their classrooms.

The bill requires school districts to estimate by July 1 each year the number of classroom teachers expected to be employed by the district or a charter school in the district, and thus eligible to receive funds through the Program, on September 1.

The bill establishes an earlier, optional date by which Program funds may be disbursed to classroom teachers depending on when the teachers are determined to be eligible by the school district. The district may distribute by August 1 proportionate shares of Program funds to classroom teachers determined to be eligible as of July 1. For teachers who are determined eligible after July 1, or if the district elects not to disburse funds by August 1, the proportionate shares of Program funds must be disbursed by September 30.

CHAPTER 2014-31, EFFECTIVE JULY 1, 2014.

SB 850 – Education by Senator John Legg (R – Lutz), expands rigorous curricular, instructional, and assessment options available to public elementary, middle, and high school students. The bill expands options to elementary students, expands options and strengthens requirements for middle school and high school students, creates a new middle grades early warning system to identify at-risk students, expands and strengthens anti-hazing provisions, and requires the Florida College System (FCS) institutions to establish a collegiate high school program for students in every school district in the colleges' designated service area. Specifically, the bill:

- Clarifies digital skill areas and certificate options for elementary students;
- Expands acceleration options and strengthens accountability requirements for middle grade students;
- Requires any public school that

includes any of the middle grades to implement an early warning system to identify students at-risk of not graduating from high school and annually report information and data on the school's early warning system in its school improvement plan;

- Expands anti-hazing provisions to the middle grades and requires each school district to adopt in rule a policy which prohibits hazing and establishes consequences for hazing;
- Specifies professional development requirements for middle grade teachers related to accountability requirements and new digital skills and content available to students;
- Requires that, for the purposes of calculating grade point average, a grade in a course that leads to an industry certification must be weighted the same as a grade in an Honors course.
- Establishes the Florida Personal Learning Scholarship Accounts Program to provide the option for a parent to better meet the individual educational needs of his or her eligible disabled child
- Establishes requirements for FCS institutions and school districts to provide a collegiate high school pathway for high school students to earn a full year of college credit while enrolled in high school;
- Provides additional, career-themed options for students in high school grades through new innovation courses and acceleration programs that, if successfully completed, are eligible to earn both high school and college credit; and
- Authorizes industry certification providers to notify students and parents about the college credits earned by the students, and the savings associated with earning the college credits, as a return on the investment of state dollars for the industry certifications

earned by the student while in public school.

- **Issue a project grant award to the Learning System Institute at the Florida State University to which participating private schools must report the scores of participating students on the nationally norm-referenced tests or the statewide assessments administered by the private school in grades 3 through 10. The project term is 2 years, and the amount of the project is up to \$500,000 per year. The project grant award must be reissued in 2 year intervals.**

The bill also expands eligibility for sparsity supplement funds to lab schools with permanent high school centers in operation as of **September 1, 2013**.

Additionally, the bill establishes bonus funding for elementary schools and teachers who directly assist students in attaining new digital skills, and expands funding to middle and high schools and teachers who directly assist students in attaining digital skills and industry certifications. Bonus funding is calculated as a component of the FEFP.

CHAPTER LAW 2014-184, EFFECTIVE JULY 1, 2014.

CS/SB 1642 – Education Accountability by Senator John Legg (R – Lutz), the bill makes substantial changes to Florida's public school statewide assessment and accountability system by eliminating the current FCAT test, including revisions to school grading and school improvement rating systems. The bill provides for a one-year transition period to new statewide, standardized assessments.

CHAPTER 2014-23, EFFECTIVE JULY 1, 2014.

HB 9 – Legislature by Representative Jeanette

Nunez (R – Miami), requires the Legislature to convene in Regular Session on January 12, 2016, creating a pilot program. The pilot program will determine if the legislature will convene in January of each even year and March of each odd year.

CHAPTER LAW 2014-106, EFFECTIVE UPON BECOMING LAW.

PCS SB 1666 -- Child Abuse and Child Welfare Services by Senator Audrey Gibson (D – Jacksonville, FSU Alum), makes numerous changes to statutes designed to protect children from abuse and neglect. The bill seeks to improve the quality of child abuse investigations conducted by the Department of Children and Families (DCF) and certain sheriff's offices. The bill increases child welfare expertise in the DCF, improves child abuse investigator qualifications, and creates a consortium of schools of social work to advise the state on child welfare policy. Specifically, the bill:

- Establishes a child protection and child welfare personnel tuition exemption program and sets out the qualifications for obtaining the exemption. The program is for high-performing child protection and child welfare personnel who do not have a master's degree in social work or a certificate in an area related to child welfare.
- Establishes a student loan forgiveness program for child protection and child welfare staff and sets out the qualifications for obtaining the loan forgiveness. Approximately half of all graduates from the state university system have a student loan debt.⁶⁴ The bill allows the DCF or a lead agency to pay up to \$3,000 per year towards the student loan debt as an incentive for degreed social workers to become child protection or child welfare personnel.
- Establishes the Florida Institute for Child Welfare (FICW) and to

set forth the purpose, duties, and responsibilities of the institute. The FICW is defined as a consortium of the state's public and private university schools of social work. The FICW is charged to advise the state on child welfare policy, improve the curriculum for social work degree programs, and develop on-the-job training for child protective investigators and child welfare case managers. The bill requires the FICW to provide a report annually by October 1 to the governor, the president of the Senate, and the speaker of the House of Representatives to describe its activities in the preceding fiscal year, present significant research findings and results of other programs, and make specific recommendations for improving child protection and child welfare services.

- Adds child protection and child welfare personnel who meet specified criteria to the list of persons exempted from payment of tuition and fees at a state college or state university under certain circumstances.
- **Creates the Florida Institute for Child Welfare within the Florida State University College of Social Work. The purpose of the institute is to advance the well being of children and families by improving the performance of child protection and child welfare services through research, policy analysis, evaluation, and leadership development. The institute shall consist of a consortium of public and private universities offering degrees in social work and shall be housed within the Florida State University College of Social Work.**

CHAPTER LAW 2014-224, EFFECTIVE JULY 1, 2014.

SB 5601 – Economic Development by Representative Ritch Workman (R – Melbourne), creates nearly

\$100,000,000 in tax cuts. The bill:

- Reduces the state Communications Services Tax rate by 0.52 percentage points.
- Creates a 3-day “back to school” sales tax holiday.
- Changes the tax treatment of mobile phone prepaid calling plans.
- Allows a local government to repeal or reduce local business taxes without having to establish an equity study commission.
- Allows sales tax dealers to receive credits or refunds of 25% of sales taxes paid on purchases made with uncollectable private-label credit card accounts.
- Revises the calculation of the premium tax imposed on bail bond premiums so that the tax rate is applied only to the amount of the premium received by the insurance company, excluding amounts retained by the bail bondsman.
- Creates a revolving loan fund program for television productions filmed in the state. The amendment does not appropriate any moneys to the fund.
- Creates a 12-day sales tax holiday for hurricane supplies.
- Reduces the Sales Tax rate on electricity purchases by 2.65 percentage points, from 7% to 4.35% and creates an additional Gross Receipts Tax rate on electricity purchases of 2.6%, thereby increasing the combined Gross Receipts tax rate on these purchases from 2.5% to 5.1%. The effect of these changes is to provide a small tax reduction to purchasers of electricity and deposit additional revenues in the Public Education Capital Outlay Trust Fund to be used for construction and maintenance of educational facilities.
- Exempts prepaid meal plans

purchased from a college or other institution of higher learning by students currently enrolled at that college or other institution of higher learning.

The amendment has a significant, negative fiscal impact on state and local government revenues.

CHAPTER LAW 2014-38, EFFECTIVE JULY 1, 2014.

HB 7073 – Information Technology Governance by Representative Seth McKeel (R – Lakeland), establishes an

enterprise information technology (IT) governance structure within the executive branch. Specifically the bill:

- Creates the Agency for State Technology (AST) within the Department of Management Services (DMS) and establishes an executive director of the agency who serves as the state's chief information officer and is appointed by the Governor and confirmed by the Senate.
- Establishes eleven other positions within the AST to include a deputy executive director, a chief planning officer, six strategic planning coordinators, a chief operations officer, a chief information security officer, and a chief technology officer.
- Authorizes a type two transfer of all records, property, unexpended balances of appropriations, administrative authority, administrative rules in chapters 71A-1 and 71A-2, Florida Administrative Code, pending issues, and existing contracts of the Agency for Enterprise Information Technology to the AST.
- Authorizes a type two transfer of the Northwood and Southwood Shared Resource Centers from the DMS to the AST and creates the state data center.

Defines the duties and responsibilities of the AST to include:

- Developing and implementing IT architecture standards,
- Establishing project management and oversight standards,
- Performing project oversight on IT projects with total costs of \$10 million or more, providing operational management and oversight of the state data center,
- Identifying opportunities for standardization and consolidation of IT services that support common business functions,
- Recommending additional consolidations of agency data centers or computing facilities, and,
- Performing project oversight on any cabinet agency IT project that has a total project cost of \$50 million or more and impacts another agency or agencies.
- Establishes the Technology Advisory Council within the AST for purposes of making recommendations to the executive director and defines the council's membership.
- Clarifies the IT security duties of the AST, individual agencies and the Florida Department of Law Enforcement's Cybercrime Office.
- Requires the AST to conduct a feasibility study and to provide recommendations managing state government data.
- Repeals sections of law relating to the AEIT, the NSRC and the SSRC; energy efficient standards for data centers; and statewide e-mail service.
- Appropriates a total of \$3.2 million and 27 full-time equivalent positions for Fiscal Year 2014-2015.

CHAPTER LAW 2014-221, EFFECTIVE JULY 1, 2014.

MISCELLANEOUS BILLS THAT PASSED

SB 156 – Motor Vehicle and Mobile Home Taxes, Fees, and Surcharges by Senator Joe Negron (R – Palm City), reduces some car and truck tag fees to pre-2009 rates. It is estimated that the average driver will save \$25 a year.

CHAPTER 2014-06, EFFECTIVE SEPTEMBER 1, 2014.

SB 392 – State Speed Zones, by Senator Jeff Brandes (R – St Petersburg), allows the Department of Transportation to increase the speed limit from 70 mph to 75 mph on interstate highways and up to 65 mph on other roadways.

VETOED BY THE GOVERNOR ON JUNE 2, 2014.

HB 7005 -- Department of Highway Safety and Motor Vehicles, by Representative Frank Artiles (R – Miami, FSU Alum), reduces driver's license suspension for minor offenses. Additionally, the bill requires motorist on the left-hand lane to move to the right when overtaken from the rear by another vehicle. The bill also requires motorists to move over when approaching a parked utility or sanitation vehicle.

CHAPTER LAW 2014-216, EFFECTIVE JULY 1, 2014.

CS/CS/SB 1030 – Low-THC Cannabis by Senator Rob Bradley (R – Orange Park), creates the "Compassionate Medical Cannabis Act of 2014." The bill changes the definition of low-THC cannabis to mean a plant of the genus Cannabis, the dried flowers of which contain 0.8 percent or less of tetrahydrocannabinol (THC) and more than 10 percent of cannabidiol (CBD) weight for weight; the seeds thereof; the resin extracted from any part of such plant; or any compound, manufacture, salt, derivative,

mixture, or preparation of such plant or its seeds or resin that is dispensed only from a dispensing organization.

Cancer patients as well as those who suffer from severe muscle spasms or seizures and who do not respond to other treatments would be eligible to be put on a "compassionate use" registry maintained by the Department of Health Office of Compassionate Use. As a condition of prescribing low-THC cannabis, the physician must determine that no other satisfactory treatment options exist and obtain a voluntary informed consent.

Criminal misdemeanor penalties are created for a physician who orders low-THC cannabis for a patient without a reasonable belief that the patient is suffering from a qualifying condition and for any person who fraudulently represents himself or herself as having a qualifying condition for the purpose of obtaining an order for low-THC cannabis.

CHAPTER LAW 2014-157, EFFECTIVE JULY 1, 2014.

SB 224 – Tobacco and Nicotine Product Regulation by Senator Lizbeth Benacquisto, defines a "nicotine product" as any product that contains nicotine, including liquid nicotine, that is intended for human consumption, whether inhaled, chewed, absorbed, dissolved or ingested by any means. The definition does not include a tobacco product under Florida law, a drug or device under Federal Law, or a product that contains incidental nicotine.

The bill redefines "nicotine dispensing devices" as any product that employs an electronic, chemical, or mechanical means to produce vapor from a nicotine product, including, but not limited to, an electronic cigarette, any similar device or product, any replacement cartridge, and any container of nicotine in a solution or other form for such devices or products. The bill provides that the sale or giving

of “nicotine products” and “nicotine dispensing devices” to minors under the age of 18 is prohibited and punishable as a second degree misdemeanor. It provides defenses, including a defense based on the appearance of the underage person and whether the underage person falsely misrepresented their age.

CHAPTER LAW 2014-65, EFFECTIVE JULY 1, 2014.

BILLS THAT FAILED

HB 355 – Postsecondary Education Textbook and Instructional Materials Affordability by Representative Elizabeth Porter (R – Lake City, FSU Alum) and SB 530 by Senator Anitere Flores (R – Miami), required the State Board of Education and the Board of Governors to adopt textbook and instructional materials affordability policies, procedures, and guidelines. The bill provided requirements for use of adopted undergraduate textbooks and instructional materials and required public postsecondary institution to post in the course registration system and on its website information relating to required and recommended textbooks and instructional materials and prices thereof. The bills died in committee.

HB 541 – Public Private Partnerships by Representative Greg Steube (R – Sarasota) and SB 900 by Senator Jack Latvala (R – Clearwater), authorized state universities or certain direct-support organizations (DSOs) to utilize public-private partnerships (P3s) as an alternate procurement process to build, upgrade, operate, own or finance qualifying projects. The bills died in committee.

SB 728 – Public Records and Public Meetings/ Postsecondary Education Executive Search by Senator

Alan Hays (R – Umatilla), and HB 135 by Representative Dave Kerner (D – Palm Springs), provided an exemption from public records requirements of any personal identifying information of an applicant for president, provost, or dean of a state university or Florida College System institution. Additionally the bill provided an exemption from public meeting requirement for any meeting held for the purpose of identifying or vetting applicants. The bills died in committee.

HB 7157 – State Group Insurance Program by Representative Seth McKeel (R – Lakeland), directed the Department of Management Services develop a plan to provide premium alternatives that reflect the cost to the program for medical and prescription drug benefits under several scenarios. DMS was required to report on the alternatives to the Governor, the President of the Senate, and the Speaker of the House of Representatives by December 1, 2014. The bill died in committee.

SB 1114 – Florida Retirement System by Senator Wilton Simpson (R – New Port Richey) and HB 7173 by Representative Jim Boyd (R – Bradenton, FSU Alum), established a cash balance retirement plan for Florida Retirement System (FRS) employees featuring individual employee accounts that are guaranteed a minimum retirement benefit. The bill also changed the vesting period from 8 years to ten years. The bills died on the calendar.

HB 391 – Florida Catastrophic Storm Risk Management Center by Representative Bill Hagar (R – Boca Raton) and SB 482 by Senator Alan Hays (R – Umatilla), provided that the State Board of Administration would annually transfer a portion of the investment income from the Florida Hurricane Catastrophe Fund to the Florida Catastrophic Storm Risk

Management Center located at The Florida State University. The House bill died on the calendar while the Senate bill remained in committee.

SB 1034 – Renovation of Educational Facilities by Senator Jack Latvala (R – Clearwater) and HB 359 by Representative Carl Zimmermann (D – Dunedin), required school districts, state universities and Florida College System institutions to retrofit the doors and windows of educational facilities to comply with certain Florida Building Code standards. The bills died in committee.

CS/SB 212 -- High School Graduation Requirements by Senator Dorothy Hukill (R – Port Orange) and HB 367 by Representative Heather Fitzenhagen (R – Ft. Myers), required credits for high school graduation and a standard high school diploma to include one-half credit for instruction in personal financial literacy and seven and one-half, rather than eight, credits in electives, etc. The bills died in committee.

HB 753 – School Safety by Representative Greg Steube (R – Sarasota) and SB 968 by Senator Alan Hays (R – Umatilla), allowed school superintendents, upon approval of the district school board, to create a school safety designee program through which the school superintendent may designate one or more individuals to carry a concealed weapon or firearm on school property. The bills died in committee.

HB 801 – Local Government Construction Preferences by Representative Heather Fitzenhagen (R – Ft. Myers) and SB 612 by Senator Alan Hays (R – Umatilla), provided that for a competitive solicitation for construction services in which 20

percent or more of the cost was to be paid from funds appropriated by the state, a local ordinance or regulation would not restrict a certified contractor from competing for the award based on the vendor's:

- Maintaining an office or place of business within a particular local jurisdiction;
- Hiring employees or subcontractors from within a particular local jurisdiction; or

- Prior payment of local taxes, assessments, or duties within a particular local jurisdiction.

It required a state college, county, municipality, school district, or other political subdivision to disclose certain information regarding the use of funds appropriated by the state in its competitive solicitation document. The bills died in committee.

CS/HB 7113 – Health Care by Representative Jason Brodeur

(R – Sanford), addressed several areas of health care, including hospital obstetrical services, trauma centers, telehealth, the certificate of need review process, and advanced practice registered nurses. The bill died in returning messages to the House.



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