



**A**fter 108 days from the start of this year's legislative session, the final gavels fell Friday in the House and Senate following each chamber's approval of a \$78.7 billion budget that still failed to settle most of the issues dividing these lawmaking bodies during the last several months. State legislators were forced to go into an additional special session because of a dispute between the House and Senate over healthcare issues that precluded them from passing a budget during the regular 60-day session.

The Senate voted 37-0 to approve the FY 2015-2016 spending plan for the year that begins July 1. The House followed suit moments later, passing the bill by a 96-17 margin. Gov. Rick Scott signed the budget into law this morning after issuing almost \$500 million in vetoes. Included in those were two projects for FSU totalling \$6 million (**see Quick Budget Guide for details**).

The budget includes tax cuts of around \$400 million a year, including a small reduction in taxes on cell phones, a 10-day sales tax holiday on back-to-school items and a year-round tax break on college textbook purchases. The governor signed the tax-break bill into law immediately (**see Spotlight on Bills for details**).

Florida State University achieved several of its session goals including an additional \$5 million in preeminence dollars, bringing the total to \$25 million, and \$16.7 million in new revenue for performance-based funding. Public Education Capitol Outlay (PECO) funding included \$5 million more for the Earth, Ocean, Atmospheric Sciences Building (EOAS), and \$3 million in planning dollars for a proposed Medical Education Building, which was unfortunately vetoed. A complete list of FSU budget items is included in this newsletter.

Shortly after lawmakers finished the special session on Friday, the House and Senate were already looking toward the 2016 regular session. House Speaker Steve Crisafulli (R-Merritt Island) and Senate President Andy Gardiner (R-Orlando) released a schedule of committee meetings that will take place from September through early December. Next year's session will start on January 12, instead of early March, because of a schedule change for 2016 that lawmakers approved last year.

This wrap-up newsletter includes a summary of the bills that passed and failed during the regular session, as well as the special session. As always, please feel free to contact me if you have questions about budget items or the outcome of legislation not listed here. I can be reached at **(850) 644-4453** or **kdaly@fsu.edu**.

*Kathleen*

# Thank You

The Office of Governmental Relations would like to express its 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 2015 Legislative Session.

**Anne Blankenship** – Academic Affairs

**Kyle Clark** – Finance and Administration

**Eric Algoe** – Finance and Administration

**Michael Lake** – Budget and Analysis

**Melissa Morrison Cueto** – Budget and Analysis

**Gary Tyson** – Faculty Senate

**Kristin Roberts** – Mag Lab

**Linda McCorvey** – Office of Research

**Mary Coburn** – Student Affairs

**Brandon Bowden** – Student Affairs

**Allison Crume** – Student Affairs

**Mike Cramer** – University Attorney

**Danielle Acosta** – Student Government

**Harrison Dubosar** – Student Government

**Vanessa Fuchs** – Athletics

**Dennis Bailey** – Facilities

**Dan Dayhoff** – Facilities

**Darryl Marshall** – Financial Aid

**Renisha Gibbs** – Human Resources

**Phaedra Harris** – Human Resources

**Karen Gibson** – Purchasing Services

**Ian Robbins** – Purchasing Services

**Paul Trombley** – Laboratory Animal Research

**Marcy Driscoll** – College of Education

**John Fogarty** – College of Medicine

**Laura Brock** – College of Medicine

**Judith Durdle** – College of Nursing

**Lynn Wicker** – Florida High

**John Hughes** – Florida Center for Reading Research

# Florida State University 2015-2016 Quick Budget Reference Guide SB 2500A

Page	Description	Line Item
42	<b>Operating Budget</b> General Revenue \$238,882,127 Included in the base: American Legion Boys and Girls State Housing \$100,000 R Campus Compact \$225,000 R Pepper Center for Long Term Care <b>\$(250,000)</b> Institute for Charter School Research \$250,000 R Preeminence – additional <b>\$5,000,000</b> = \$25,000,000	138
4	Lottery \$37,680,207	12
42	Student and Other Fees \$234,017,553	138
45	Student Financial Assistance \$1,467,667	146
43	SUS Performance Based Incentive \$400,000,000 FSU's portion of Performance Incentive Includes <b>\$16,700,000</b> new money	138
44	<b>College of Medicine</b> General Revenue \$34,321,745	142
5	Lottery \$605,115	16
44	Student and Other Fees \$11,572,716	142
96	FSU – College of Medicine – Immokalee \$463,500 NR	441
96	Primary Care Residency Slots <b>VETOED</b> <b>\$3,000,000 R</b>  <b>Proviso:</b> ... \$3,000,000 from the General Revenue Fund is provided to the Florida State University College of Medicine in fulfillment of its mission pursuant to section 1004.42, Florida Statutes, to develop and oversee a rural primary care residency program. These funds shall be used to provide residency training and rural rotations for the Florida State University College of Medicine residents in the Agency for Health Care Administration District 1, sub-district 1, sub-district 2, sub-district 2-1, and District 8, sub-district 2.	442A
6	<b>PECO</b> SUS FCO – Maintenance, Repair, Renovation & Remodeling \$35,000,000 FSU – Maint. Repair. Renovation & Remodeling \$4,902,384	18
7	Earth Ocean Atmospheric Science Building \$5,000,000 Medical School – Medical Education Facility to train Physicians for Rural and Underserved Areas <b>VETOED</b> <b>\$3,000,000</b>	21
7	<b>SUS Lab School – PECO</b> \$5,080,837  <b>Proviso:</b> ...shall be distributed among the lab schools based upon full-time equivalent student membership.	19
15	<b>SUS - Florida National Merit Scholars Incentive Program</b> \$8,379,932	66

Page	Description		Line Item
15	<b>SUS - Honorably Discharged Graduate Assistance/GAP</b>	\$1,000,000	71
	<b>Proviso:</b> ... are provided for supplemental need-based veteran educational benefits. Funds shall be used to assist in the payment of living expenses during holiday and semester breaks for active duty and honorably discharged members of the Armed Forces who served on or after September 11, 2001. To ensure students in public, as well as private institutions have an opportunity to receive funding, allocations to institutions shall be prorated based on the number of total eligible students at eligible institutions.		
26	Florida Diagnostic and Learning Resource Ctr. General Revenue – <b>FSU</b>	\$450,000R	97
27	Autism/CARD - <b>FSU College of Medicine</b> General Revenue	\$1,171,922R	102
30-31	Communication/Autism Navigator – <b>FSU Col. of Medicine</b>	\$1,353,292R	107
	<b>Proviso:</b> ...shall be awarded to the Florida State University College of Medicine for statewide implementation of an exceptional student education communication/autism navigator that includes core strategies and interventions through the Early Steps Program to increase the number of full integration placements of exceptional students into the standard classroom.		
32	<b>Public Broadcasting</b> Statewide Gov. & Cultural Affairs Programming Florida Channel Closed Captioning - GR Florida Channel Year Round Coverage – GR +proviso FSU – Public Television FSU – Public Radio Stations FSU – Satellite Transponder	\$497,522 \$390,862 \$2,562,588 \$307,447 \$100,000 \$800,000	115
	<b>Proviso...</b> 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	<b>Performance Incentives</b>	\$400,000,000	138
	<b>Proviso</b> ... \$400,000,000 is provided for State University System Performance Based Incentives. The Board of Governors shall allocate all appropriated funds for State University System Performance Based Incentives based on indicators of institutional attainment of performance metrics adopted by the Board and as updated by the Board on November 6, 2014.  The Board of Governors shall evaluate the universities' performance on the metrics based on benchmarks, adopted by the board which measure the achievement of institutional excellence or improvement. The funds available for allocation to the universities based on the performance funding model shall consist of the state's investment of \$150,000,000 in performance funding, plus an institutional investment of \$250,000,000 consisting of funds to be redistributed from the base funding of the State University System. The state investment shall be distributed in accordance with the performance funding model...		
44	FAMU/FSU College of Engineering	\$12,999,685 R	138A
329	Florida Catastrophic Storm Risk Management Center	\$1,500,000 R	2434A

Page	Description	Line Item
21	<b>Proviso:</b> From the funds provided in Specific Appropriations 7 and 90, \$52,800,000 is provided for the Sparsity Supplement as defined in section 1011.62(7), Florida Statutes, for school districts of 24,000 and fewer FTE in the 2015-2016 fiscal year. FSUS receives a portion of the Sparsity supplement.	90
333	\$632,639	2479
	<b>Proviso:</b> ...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...	
333	Enhancements to Public Hurricane Loss Model – \$1,700,000	2479A
	<b>Proviso</b> ...FIU shall update the Florida Public Hurricane Loss Model in Coordination with the Office of Insurance Regulation; the Division of Emergency Management; <b>the Florida Catastrophic Storm Risk Management Center, The Center for Ocean-Atmospheric Prediction Studies, and the Meteorology Department at FSU.</b>	
406	<b>State Health Insurance Plans and Benefits – Proviso</b> <i>Employee Paid Premiums</i> ...For coverage period beginning August 1, 2015, the employee share shall continue at the current rate....	Section 8
407	<b>Proviso</b> ... Each state agency, at the discretion of the agency head, may expend funds provided in this act for bar dues and for legal education courses for employees who are required to be a member of the Florida Bar as a condition of employment.	Section 8
401	<b>Proviso:</b> ...facilities may be constructed or acquired from non-appropriated sources, which upon completion will require general revenue funds to operate.  Florida State University - Building 4985 Osceola Building - Will provide storage for academic support programs, 2,000 gsf.  Florida State University - Building 945 Training Center - Will house training activities for various E&G departments, 11,000 gsf.  Florida State University - Building 4984 Living/Learning Center – Will provide storage for academic support programs, 2,250 gsf.  Florida State University - Building 4060 - Will provide space to construct Living Learning classroom space, 1,500 gsf.	Section 16
412	<b>Proviso:</b> ...may be constructed, acquired, and financed by a university or university direct support organization. Financing mechanisms include any form of approved debt or bonds authorized by the Board of Governors.  Florida State University – Athletic Facilities and Bond Refinancing	Section 18

**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: [flsenate.gov](http://flsenate.gov)

R = Recurring

NR = Non-recurring

# SPOTLIGHT ON **BILLS**

## **BILLS THAT PASSED DURING THE SPECIAL SESSION**

**SB 2502A** – Implementing by Senator Tom Lee (R – Brandon), provides substantive modifications for the 2015-2016 fiscal year. Following is a section by section list of some of the modifications that affect education:

**Section 1** provides legislative intent that the implementing and administering provisions of this act apply to the General Appropriations Act for Fiscal Year 2015-2016.

**Section 2** incorporates the Florida Education Finance Program (FEFP) work papers by reference for the purpose of displaying the calculations used by the Legislature.

**Section 3** provides that funds provided for instructional materials shall be released and expended as required in the proviso language attached to Specific Appropriation 90.

**Section 4** provides that any district school board that generates less than \$2 million dollars in revenue from one mill of ad valorem tax shall contribute 0.75 mill, rather than 1.5 mills, for Fiscal Year 2015-2016 to the cost of funded special facilities projects.

**Section 5** modifies Personal Learning Scholarship Accounts (PLSA) to expand program eligibility and the authorized use of program funds, establish eligibility priority, update the eligibility verification process, strengthen safeguards against

unauthorized expenditures, and advance the release of funds for the 2015-2016 fiscal year.

**Section 6** modifies the surety bond requirements for nonprofit scholarship-funding organizations

**Sections 7, 8, and 9** make several changes to the Florida Education Finance Program (FEFP) including extending the extra hour of reading for the lowest 300 performing elementary schools, adjusting the sparsity supplement calculation, creating the federal connected student supplement, amending the digital classrooms allocation, and extending for an additional year the authority for school districts to levy the Prior Period Funding Adjustment Millage (PPFAM) before the final taxable value is certified with technical clarifications to ensure that the PPFAM is not levied multiple times for the same year.

**Section 10** requires the Department of Education to administer an educator liability insurance program.

**Section 11** notwithstanding ss. 1009.534, 1009.535, and 1009.536, Florida Statutes, relating to community service work requirements for Bright Futures initial eligibility. For the 2015-2016 fiscal year, a student may fulfill the community service work requirement by completing a program of volunteer service work which may include, but is not limited to, a business or government internship, work for a nonprofit community service

organization, or activity on behalf of a candidate for public office.

**Sections 12 and 13** extend to March 15 the deadline for the Board of Governors annual accountability report under s. 1008.46, F.S.

**Section 14** establishes the State University System Performance-Based Incentive.

**Section 15** establishes the Florida College System Performance-Based Incentive.

**Section 16** authorizes the Office of Early Learning to allocate or reallocate funds held by the Child Care Executive Partnership Program to prevent disenrollment of children from the school readiness program or child care funded through the Child Care Executive Partnership Program.

**Section 19** provides that the Agency for Health Care Administration is authorized to submit a budget amendment to realign Medicaid funding based on the parameters of various hospital funding programs included in the document titled "Medicaid Hospital Funding Programs" incorporated by reference in SB 2508-A, consistent with legislative intent.

**Section 20** provides parameters to the Agency for Persons with Disabilities for removing clients from the wait list for home and community-based waiver services and provides client prioritization for that process.

**Sections 23 and 24** amend s. 393.067(15), F.S., to provide that the Agency for Persons with Disabilities is not required to contract with licensed comprehensive transitional education programs.

**Sections 25 and 26** amend ss. 393.18(4)-(6), F.S., to provide that for comprehensive transitional education programs (CTEP), the total number of residents being provided with services may not in any instance exceed the licensed capacity of 120 residents, and each residential unit within a CTEP may not in any instance exceed 15 residents, except that a program authorized to operate residential units with more than 15 residents prior to July 1, 2015, may continue to operate such units. Deletes provisions authorizing licensure of CTEPs under specified conditions.

**Section 44** provides that the online procurement system transaction fee authorized in ss. 287.042(1)(h)1 and 287.057, F.S., currently set at one percent per rule of the Department of Management Services will be reduced to .7 percent for the 2015-2016 fiscal year only, effective November 1, 2015.

**Section 74** authorizes the EOG to transfer funds in the appropriation category "Special Categories-Transfer to DMS-Human Resources Services Purchased Per Statewide Contract" of the 2015-2016 General Appropriations Act between departments, in order to align the budget authority granted with the assessments that must be paid by each agency to the DMS for human resources management services.

**Section 75** amends s. 112.24, F.S., to provide that the reassignment of an employee of a state agency may be made if recommended by the Governor or Chief Justice, as appropriate, and approved by the chairs of the Senate and House budget committees. Such actions shall be

deemed approved if neither chair provides written notice of objection within 14 days after receiving notice of the action, pursuant to s. 216.177, F.S. This requirement applies to state employee reassignments regardless of which agency (sending or receiving) is responsible for pay and benefits of assigned employee.

**Section 76** maintains legislative salaries at the July 1, 2010 level.

**Sections 77 and 78** amend s. 215.32(2)(b), F.S., in order to implement the transfer of moneys to the General Revenue Fund from trust funds in the 2015-2016 General Appropriations Act.

**Section 79** provides that, in order to implement the issuance of new debt authorized in the 2015-2016 General Appropriations Act, and pursuant to the requirements of s. 215.98, F.S., the Legislature determines that the authorization and issuance of debt for the 2015-2016 fiscal year should be implemented and is in the best interest of the state.

**Section 80** provides that funds appropriated for travel by state employees be limited to travel for activities that are critical to each state agency's mission. The section prohibits funds from being used to travel to foreign countries, other states, conferences, staff-training, or other administrative functions unless the agency head approves in writing. The agency head is required to consider the use of teleconferencing and electronic communication to meet needs of activity before approving travel.

**Section 81** provides that the EOG is authorized to transfer funds appropriated in any appropriation category used to pay for data processing in the GAA between agencies in order to align the budget authority granted with the utilization rate of each department.

**Section 82** provides that the EOG is authorized to transfer funds in the specific appropriation category "Data Processing Services - State Data Center - AST" between agencies in order to align the budget authority granted with the AST estimated billing cycle and methodology.

**Section 83** notwithstanding s. 216.292(2)(a), F.S., which authorizes agency budget transfers of up to 5 percent of approved budget between categories. Except for transfers approved pursuant to section 81 and 82 of the Implementing Bill, agencies are prohibited from transferring funds from a data center appropriation category to a category other than a data center appropriation category.

**Sections 85 and 86** reenact amendments to s. 110.12315, F.S., that: modify copayments associated with the state employees' group health insurance program consistent with decisions that have been made in the General Appropriations Act; authorize the Department of Management Services, for the state employees' prescription drug program, to negotiate the pharmacy dispensing fee, to implement a 90-day supply limit program for certain maintenance drugs at retail pharmacies for state employees under certain circumstances, and to maintain a list of maintenance drugs and preferred brand name drugs; and provide that copayments for state employees for a 90-day supply of prescription drugs at a retail pharmacy will be the same as a 90-day supply through mail order. **Effective July 1, 2015. Signed by the governor June 23, 2015.**

**HB 33A – Taxation by Representative Matt Gaetz (R – Shalimar, FSU Alum)**, provides for a wide range of tax reductions designed to directly impact both households and businesses. The bill includes the following tax rate reductions: state communications

services tax (CST) rate by 0.9 percentage points, with an additional temporary 0.9 percentage point reduction in the following year; state sales tax rate on rental of commercial real estate by 0.4 percentage points, with an additional temporary 0.1 percent reduction in the following year.

The bill includes new or expanded sales tax exemptions for the following: agricultural items, including feed for aquatic organisms, irrigation equipment, costs of maintenance and repairs of irrigation and power farm equipment, stakes, and certain trailers; K-12 school food and beverage concessions in support of extra-curricular activities; machinery and equipment used for metal recycling; gun club memberships or admissions; and motor vehicles brought to Florida by military service-members deployed outside of the U.S.

The bill includes the following sales tax holidays: a ten-day “back-to-school” holiday for clothing, footwear, school supplies, and computers (August 7, 2015, through 11:59 p.m. on August 16, 2015); a one day tax free period on November 28, 2015, for sales of items priced at \$1,000 or less by certain small businesses; *and exempts the sales of college textbooks and instructional materials from sales tax from July 1, 2015 – June 30, 2016.*

With respect to property taxes, the bill: increases from \$500 to \$5,000 of value the longstanding exemption for widows, widowers, blind, or totally and permanently disabled persons; and updates and expands the current partial homestead exemption available to military service-members deployed overseas.

The bill makes the following corporate income tax changes: increases total tax credits available for voluntary brownfields clean-up; revises the distribution for the current research

and development tax credit and increases the annual credits that can be awarded; extends the Community Contribution Tax Credit program with \$14.7 million in tax credits for one year (also taken against sales tax).

Other changes include: creation of an alternative process for retaining homestead status in certain circumstances; elimination of the obsolete Florida estate tax; equalization of the tax rates applied to apple and pear cider; a permanent extension of a current title insurance premiums tax reduction; an exemption from the aviation fuel tax for fuel used by certain Florida higher educational institutions; and clarification of CST dealer tax reporting period requirements and the sales tax exemption on prepaid college meal plans. **Effective July 1, 2015. Chapter Law 2015-221.**

### **BILLS THAT PASSED DURING THE REGULAR SESSION**

**CS/CS/HB 41 – Hazardous Walking Conditions by Representative Larry Metz (R – Eustis, FSU Alum)**, relates to identifying, inspecting, and correcting hazardous walking conditions on roads students walk along or cross in order to walk to school. The current statute applies to elementary school students through grade 6 living within a 2-mile radius of a school. Currently, the law states the intent is for the condition to be corrected within a reasonable time, but does not require entities with jurisdiction over a road with an identified hazardous walking condition to correct the condition. **Effective July 1, 2015, Chapter Law 2015-101.**

**HB 225 All-American Flag Act by Representative Bob Cortes (R – Maitland)**, requires all United States and state flags purchased by the state, a county, or a municipality for public use, after January 1, 2016, to be made in the United States

entirely from domestically grown, produced, and manufactured materials. **Effective July 1, 2015, Chapter Law 2015-137.**

**CS/CS/CS/SB 248 – Public Records/Body Camera Recording Made by a Law Enforcement Officer by Senator Chris Smith (D – Ft. Lauderdale, FSU Alum)**, makes a body camera recording, or a portion thereof, confidential and exempt from public disclosure if the recording is taken:

- Within the interior of a private residence;
- Within the interior of a facility that offers health care, mental health care, or social services;
- At the scene of a medical emergency involving a death or involving an injury that requires transport to a medical facility; or
- In a place that a reasonable person would expect to be private.

**Effective July 1, 2015, Chapter Law 2015-41.**

**CS/SB 426 Department of Education and Board of Governors of the State University System by Senator Don Gaetz (R – Destin)**, terminates five obsolete trust funds within the Department of Education or Board of Governors of the State University System: the Building Fee Trust Fund, the Replacement Trust Fund, the University Concurrency Trust Fund, the Law Enforcement Trust Fund, and the Uniform Payroll Trust Fund. The bill also clarifies the administration of the Capital Improvement Fee Trust Fund by statutorily placing it under the Board of Governors, where it currently resides in practice, and directs state universities to deposit proceeds accrued pursuant to the provisions of the Florida Contraband Forfeiture Act



into the appropriate local account.  
**Chapter Law 2015-7, Effective July 1, 2015, Chapter Law 2015-7.**

**HB 435 – Administrative Procedures by Representative Janet Adkins (R – Fernandina Beach)**, bill amends provisions of the Administrative Procedures Act (APA) to enhance the opportunities for substantially affected parties to challenge rules. Specifically, the bill makes the following changes to the APA, including, but not limited to:

- Revising rulemaking procedures based on petitions to initiate rulemaking alleging an un-adopted rule;
- Expanding the listing of information that must be published on the Florida Administrative Register to include rules filed for adoption in the previous seven days and a listing of all rules filed for adoption but awaiting legislative ratification;
- Revising the pleading requirements and burden of going forward with evidence in challenges to proposed and unadopted rules;
- Extending the time to appeal certain final orders when notice to the party was delayed; and
- Requiring agencies to identify and certify all of the rules the violation of which would be a minor violation. **Effective July 1, 2015.**

**HB 553 – Public Libraries by Representative Keith Perry (R – Gainesville)**, revises the powers and duties of the Department of State's Division of Library and Information Services (Division) and removes outdated and burdensome practices required for the submission and collection of documents. The bill establishes the State Publications Program requiring

each state official, department, court, or agency to designate a state publications liaison; and defines the terms "depository library" and "state publication." The bill also restructures the composition of the State Library Council and specifies that the Council's purpose is to assist the Division with planning, policy, and priorities related to the development of statewide information services. The Division is directed to coordinate with the Department of Education's Division of Blind Services to provide services to the blind and physically handicapped persons. **Effective July 1, 2015, Chapter Law 2015-117.**

**CS/SB 642 – Individuals with Disabilities by Senator Lizbeth Benacquisto (R – Ft. Myers)**, creates the Florida Achieving a Better Life Experience (ABLE) program, which would assist individuals with disabilities in saving money without losing their eligibility for state and federal benefits, and thereby providing a pathway for economic independence and a better quality of life. ABLE accounts resemble in some respects the federal 529-college savings plan that are tax-advantaged savings accounts. The federal ABLE Act of 2014 ("ABLE Act") authorizes states to establish ABLE programs as an agency or instrumentality of the state or contract with other states to administer such accounts if certain conditions are met.

The bill directs the Florida Prepaid College Board (Prepaid Board) to create Florida ABLE, Inc., as a direct support organization that must be organized as a not-for-profit corporation. The board of directors of Florida ABLE, Inc., must include the Chair of the Prepaid Board, one member appointed by the Prepaid Board (who may be a member of the Prepaid Board) and one member appointed by the Governor, both of whom have experience in accounting, risk management, or investment management, one appointee of the

President of the Florida Senate, and one appointee of the Speaker of the Florida House of Representatives. The legislative appointees would include one advocate for individuals with disabilities and one advocate for individuals with developmental disabilities. The bill provides that the Florida ABLE, Inc., would operate under a contract with the Prepaid Board. Florida ABLE, Inc., is required to implement the Florida ABLE Program on or before July 1, 2016. **Effective upon becoming law, Chapter Law 2015-56.**

**CS/CS/SB 646 – Public Records/ Florida ABLE, Inc. by Senator Lizbeth Benacquisto (R – Ft. Myers)**, creates a public records exemption for specified personal financial and health information of a consumer relating to an ABLE account or a participation agreement or any information that would identify a consumer held by the Florida Prepaid College Board, Florida ABLE Inc., Florida ABLE program, or an agent or service provider of these entities. The bill defines a consumer as a party to a participation agreement, which would be under the Florida ABLE Program. **The bill is effective on the same date that SB 642 or similar legislation takes effect, if such legislation is adopted in the same legislative session or an extension thereof and becomes a law. Chapter Law 2015-58.**

**SB 694 – Florida State Employees' Charitable Campaign by Senator Jeremy Ring (D – Margate)**, allows state officers and employees to donate to the Florida State Employees' Charitable Campaign (FSECC) at agency fundraising events without designating specific organizations to receive the funds. The bill provides that the FSECC's fiscal agent must distribute these "undesignated" funds to participating charitable organizations in direct proportion to the percentage of designated

funds or pledges received by the organization. The bill removes additional eligibility requirements for independent unaffiliated agencies, international service agencies, and national agencies wanting to participate in the FSECC. In addition, the bill removes the statutory requirement to establish a local steering committee in each fiscal agent area. **Effective July 1, 2015, Chapter Law 2015-61.**

**SB 984 – Exemption from Lobbying Requirements by Senator Oscar Braynon (D – Miami Gardens, FSU Alum),** clarifies that the use of a public facility or public property provided from a governmental entity to a legislator for a public purpose is not an expenditure for purposes of the “legislative expenditure ban” in s. 11.045, F.S., regardless of whether the governmental entity is a principal. Unlike the current Rules of the Florida Senate and the Administrative Policy Manual of the Florida House of Representatives, this statutory exception does not include any requirement for approval by the presiding officers prior to the expenditure being made between the governmental entity and the legislator. **Effective July 1, 2015, Chapter Law 2015-28.**

**HB 7035 – Presidential Preference Primary by Representative Ritch Workman (R – Melbourne),** revises the date of the presidential primary, requiring that the primary be held on the third Tuesday in March in each presidential election year. **Effective March 19, 2015, Chapter Law 2015-5.**

**HB 7069 – Education Accountability by Representative Marlene O’Toole (R – The Villages),** revises education accountability measures to coincide with the Governor’s “Let’s Keep Florida Learning” plan.

Specifically the bill:

- Allows districts to set a school start date as early as August 10 each year.
- Eliminates unnecessary and duplicative state and district assessments by repealing the statewide, standardized 11th grade ELA assessment and repealing the required administration of the PERT to high school students.
- Prohibits administration of final exams in addition to statewide, standardized EOC assessments.
- Provides flexibility to districts to monitor the reading proficiency of K-3 students and address the needs of students who struggle in reading and math.
- Streamlines provisions relating to 4th grade promotion and district K-12 comprehensive reading plans.
- Reduces classroom disruption by allowing district employees such as teacher assistants to administer state assessments.
- Enhances transparency and assessment literacy by requiring the development and use of a uniform assessment calendar, specifying required elements for the calendar, and requiring timely reporting of district assessment and progress monitoring results to teachers and parents.
- Grants districts greater flexibility in measuring student performance in grades and subjects not associated with the state assessment program.
- Grants districts greater flexibility in evaluating teacher performance by reducing the student performance and instructional practice evaluation components

to one third each and streamlining evaluation system monitoring provisions.

- Requires the state board to publish a comparison of district and state evaluation results.

**Effective April 14, 2015, Chapter Law 2015-6.**

**SB 7028 – Educational Opportunities for Veterans by Senator Thad Altman (R – Cape Canaveral),** amends the Congressman C.W. “Bill” Young Veteran Tuition Waiver Program to allow additional persons to be eligible for the out-of-state tuition fee waiver currently afforded to honorably discharged veterans residing in Florida and enrolled in a state university, Florida College System institution, career center operated by a school district, or charter technical career center. The bill requires a state university, Florida College System institution, career center operated by a school district, or charter technical career center to waive out-of-state fees for any person who is receiving educational assistance through the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs and who physically resides in Florida while enrolled in the institution. This addition allows individuals, such as a spouse or child of a veteran or service-member using GI Bill benefits, to qualify for in-state tuition rates. **Effective upon becoming law, Chapter Law 2015-76.**

**SB 290 -- Carrying a Concealed Weapon or a Concealed Firearm by Senator Jeff Brandes (R – St. Petersburg),** provides an exemption from criminal penalties for carrying a concealed weapon or a concealed firearm when evacuating pursuant to a mandatory evacuation order during a declared state of emergency, etc. **Effective upon becoming a law, Chapter Law 2015-44.**

## **BILLS THAT FAILED DURING THE SPECIAL SESSION**

**HB 21A – State Group Insurance Program by Representative Jason Brodeur (R – Sanford),** established employee contribution rates for standard plans and high deductible health plans for the 2016 plan year reflecting the actuarial benefit difference between the HMO and the PPO. Employees will be given a choice between paying more for the higher value HMO and paying less, compared to the prior year, for the lower value PPO. Employees will have a choice between richer benefits or greater take-home pay.

The bill added new products and services to the program by giving DMS broad authority to contract for a wide variety of additional products and services. Employees would have been able to purchase new products as optional benefits. The bill died in committee.

## **BILLS THAT FAILED DURING THE REGULAR LEGISLATIVE SESSION**

**SB 938 -- Postsecondary Education Affordability by Senator Anitere Flores (R – Miami) and HB 7125 by Representative Elizabeth Porter (R – Lake City, FSU Alum),** exempted textbooks required or recommended for a course offered by a public or nonpublic postsecondary educational institution from the tax imposed by ch. 212, F.S.; requiring a public postsecondary institution to post information relating to required and recommended textbooks and instructional materials and prices in its course registration system and on its website. The bills died in committee, however, **HB 33A, the tax break package passed during the special session provides a year-long sales tax exemption on the purchase of college textbooks.**

**HB 4005 -- Licenses to Carry Concealed Weapons or Firearms by Representative Greg Steube (R – Sarasota) and SB 176 by Senator Greg Evers (R – Pensacola),** deleted the provision in law prohibiting concealed carry licensees from openly carrying a handgun or carrying a concealed weapon or firearm into college or university facility. The bills died on the calendar.

**SB 7030 – Postsecondary Education for Students With Disabilities by Senator Don Gaetz (R – Destin) and HB 7091 by Representative Bob Cortes (R – Maitland),** established mechanisms for the approval of unique postsecondary education programs tailored to the needs of students with intellectual disabilities and statewide coordination of information. Specifically, the bill includes two key components:

- A process through which postsecondary institutions in Florida can voluntarily seek approval to offer a Florida Postsecondary Comprehensive Transition Program (FPCTP) for students with intellectual disabilities; and
- A Florida Center for Students with Unique Abilities (statewide coordinating center) for statewide coordination of information regarding programs and services for students with disabilities and their parents.

The bills died on the calendar.

**HB 747 – Bright Futures Scholarship by Representative Patrick Rooney (R – Palm Beach Gardens) and SB 960 by Senator Tom Lee (R – Brandon),** allowed a student who is eligible for a Florida Bright Futures Scholarship award, but unable to accept the award immediately following high

school graduation due to a full-time religious or service obligation lasting at least 18 months, to defer the 2-year initial award period and the 5-year renewal period until the student completes the religious or service obligation. The bills also modifies student community service requirements for Florida Bright Futures Scholarship Program. The bills died on the calendar, however, for the 2015-2016 fiscal year, a student may fulfill the community service work requirement by completing a program of volunteer service work which may include, but is not limited to, a business or government internship, work for a nonprofit community service organization, or activity on behalf of a candidate for public office as passed in Senate Bill 2502A.

**SB 130 -- Florida Catastrophic Storm Risk Management Center by Senator Alan Hays (R – Umatilla) and HB 53 by Representative Doug Broxson (R – Milton),** required the State Board of Administration to annually transfer a portion of the investment income of the Florida Hurricane Catastrophe Fund to the Florida Catastrophic Storm Risk Management Center at Florida State University to support the center's ongoing operations. The bills died on the calendar.

**HB 19 School Safety by Representative Greg Steube (R – Sarasota) and SB 180 by Senator Greg Evers (R – Pensacola),** permitted school superintendent, with approval of the school board, to authorize school safety designee to carry concealed weapon or firearm on school property. The bills died on the calendar.

**SB 824 -- Public Procurement Practices by Senator Greg Evers (R – Pensacola) and HB 63 by Representative Greg Steube (R – Sarasota),** deleted provisions that

created the Public-Private Partnership Guidelines Task Force. The bill required a responsible public entity to include a design criteria package in a solicitation and increased the dollar threshold for a contract amount of a project for which a person, the state or a political subdivision was prohibited from refusing a surety bond issued by a surety company that met certain criteria, etc. The bills died on the calendar.

**SB 182 -- Public Records and Meetings/Postsecondary Education Executive Search by Senator Alan Hays (R – Umatilla) and HB 223 by Representative Neil Combee (R – Auburndale),** provided an exemption from public records requirements for any personal identifying information, including the name, of an applicant for president, provost, or dean of a state university or Florida College System institution. The bills died on the calendar.

**SB 7042 -- Florida Retirement System by Senator Jeremy Ring (D – Margate) and HB 1249 by Representative Dan Raulerson (R – Plant City, FSU Alum),** authorized renewed membership in the retirement system for retirees who are reemployed in a position eligible for the Special Risk Class and Elected Officers' Class under certain circumstance. The bills also provided for renewed membership in the retirement system for retirees of the Senior Management Service Optional Annuity Program who are employed on or after a specified date, etc. The bills died in committee.

**HB 4039 – Public Records and**

**Public Meetings/University Direct-Support Organizations by Representative Michelle Rehwinkel Vasilinda (D – Tallahassee),** deleted the provision that protects identity of a donor to university direct-support organization and deleted the public records exemption for university direct-support organization, and the public meetings exemption for certain meetings of university direct-support organization. The bill died in committee.

**SB 490 -- State Lotteries by Senator Geraldine Thompson (D – Orlando, FSU Alum) and HB 1189 by Representative Gwyn Clarke-Reed (D – Pompano Beach),** required the Department of the Lottery to split evenly the net revenue between certain universities located in this state and direct service providers for breast cancer research and the provision of services for certain individuals who have breast cancer. The bills offered a special instant lottery game called "Ticket for the Cure" by the department for a limited time. The bills died in committee.

**SB 1552 -- Student Choice by Senator Lizbeth Benacquisto (R – Ft. Myers) and HB 7037 by Representative Bob Cortes (R – Maitland),** required the disclosure of financial information to parents regarding costs associated with the education of their children, expands K-12 public school choice enrollment options, and modifies charter school requirements and options.

**HB 63 -- Public-Private Partnerships by Representative**

**Greg Steube (R – Sarasota) and SB 826 by Senator Greg Evers (R – Pensacola),** deleted the Public-Private Partnership Guidelines Task Force and revised provisions regarding responsible public entities & unsolicited proposals submitted for qualified projects. Additionally the bills revised provisions regarding comprehensive agreements entered into between responsible public entities & private entities and deleted provisions relating to notice to affected local jurisdictions, etc. The bills died in committee.

**HB 65 -- Public Records & Public Meetings by Representative Greg Steube (R – Sarasota) and SB 824 by Senator Greg Evers (R – Pensacola),** provided an exemption from public records requirements and public meetings requirements for unsolicited proposals held by a responsible public entity for a specified period. The bills required that recordings be made of closed meeting and provided an exemption from public records requirements for records generated during closed meeting for a specified period. The bills died on the Calendar.

*Additionally, SB 1448 by Senator John Legg (R – Lutz) and HB 7037 by Representative Manny Diaz (R – Hialeah), are the bills that created the Florida Institute for Charter School Innovation at the Florida State University to provide technical assistance to charter school applicants and improve charter school accountability, quality, and innovation. The bills died in committee but \$250,000 recurring funds were appropriated to Florida State University's base budget for planning of the Institute during the special budget session.*



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