

Dear Friend of USF,

Today is Day 22 of the 60-day legislative session. The House and Senate are well underway in formulating their respective budget proposals. After each side has debated and passed their own spending plan, the leaders of each chamber will appoint a “Conference Committee” whose job is to negotiate a compromise between the two chambers’ budgets. The compromise product from the Conference Committee will be the “General Appropriations Act for Fiscal Year 2011-2012” or the official state budget for next year.

Currently, the Senate is proposing to spend roughly \$240 million more in higher education (including student tuition payments) than the House. The vast majority of this difference is in lower House proposed spending on State Universities, since universities constitute upwards of 60% of the state’s overall higher education spending. However, there are elements of each chamber’s initial spending plan and implementing legislation that are favorable for state universities and the USF System. We will be working hard over the final six weeks of session to ensure the best possible outcome for each of USF’s institutions and campuses and to maximize our Board of Trustees’ and our local campus boards’ ability to direct precious resources to the areas of greatest need during this economic downturn.

Thank you for your interest and advocacy on behalf of the USF System.

Mark Walsh

Assistant VP & Director of Government Relations for the USF System



USF Tallahassee Intern Program (TIP)

USF has a well-regarded Tallahassee Intern Program (TIP) which places Young Bulls in legislative positions during session, requiring students to live in Tallahassee. The instructional component includes briefings with top state leaders.

Pictured above (l to r) are TIP interns **Russell Romeo, Bess Georges, Jennifer Ashton, Corey Staniscia, Commissioner of Agriculture and Consumer Services, Adam Putnam, Deonte Franklin** and **Jose Arrona**. Commissioner Putnam briefed students on his agency and Cabinet responsibilities, including his career path. He entertained a free and easy question and answer session as well. Our students were delighted to learn that Commissioner Putnam got his political start as a congressional intern.



In addition to TIP, USF also places students in the Tampa Bay Area offices of elected officials at the local, state and federal levels as a part of the Legislative Intern Program (LIP). This program has just celebrated its 10th successful year. Pictured above with TIP interns are three LIP interns who used their Spring Break as an opportunity to learn more, hands-on, in Tallahassee. LIP interns **Lee Smith** (second from left, back), **Georgeann Ayers** (third from left) and **Kristin Bradstreet** (center, back) joined the six TIP interns in an eye-opening budget briefing by Governor Scott’s **Budget Director Jerry McDaniel** (second from right) and **Policy Coordinator Renee Tondee** (far right).



*LIP interns with proud Bulls supporter and USF graduate **H. Lee Moffitt**, former Speaker, Florida House of Representatives (center)*



*Interns had the privilege of spending time with **Attorney General Pam Bondi** (center) at the Capitol.*

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Locate contact information for your local Florida State Senator and Representative using your home address at:

flsenate.gov/Senators/Find

BILLS IN BRIEF

(SB = Senate Bill; HB = House Bill)

SB 632 BY SENATOR OELRICH (R-GAINESVILLE) RE: UNIVERSITY CONCURRENCY TRUST FUND

Summary: This bill provides a recurring funding source for the state’s University Concurrency Trust Fund. The trust fund provides funding to state universities to pay their host communities for the impact of any construction on campus which necessitates offsite improvements. The trust fund’s balance has depleted over time and this bill would designate a recurring source of existing state revenue into the trust fund to replenish it. Without the ability to pay for these impacts, construction on state universities’ campuses could be negatively affected. The passage of this bill is a high priority for USF and the full State University System.

Latest Action: *On March 22nd, the Senate Higher Education Committee amended the bill to revise the structure of university concurrency payments to allow construction on state university campuses to move forward unimpeded. The revised bill must first pass additional Senate committees before receiving a full Senate vote.*

LINK TO SB 632: <http://capwiz.com/usfalumni/issues/alert/?alertid=34325526>

SB 234 BY SENATOR EVERS (R-BAKER) AND HB 517 BY REPRESENTATIVE DORWORTH (R-LAKE MARY) RE: FIREARMS

Summary: These bills allow any person who is issued a concealed weapons or concealed firearms permit to carry the weapon or firearm in open sight. A prior version of these bills would have also deleted the section of current law that provides that a concealed weapons or firearms permit-holder is not authorized to carry the weapon or firearm into a state university, Florida College or career center facility, which would have made it legal to carry openly there.

Latest Action: *House Bill--On March 15th, the House Criminal Justice Subcommittee amended the bill to restore the current legal prohibition on bringing guns onto university campuses. The Senate Bill was similarly amended to restore this prohibition during an earlier meeting. Pending future amendments, this will be the last update provided on these bills as the current versions no longer have any effect on state universities.*

LINK TO SB 234: <http://capwiz.com/usfalumni/issues/alert/?alertid=34340501>

HB 7151 BY THE HOUSE K-20 INNOVATION SUBCOMMITTEE RE: POSTSECONDARY EDUCATION

Summary: This bill proposes several changes to postsecondary education statutes. Among the changes the bill proposes is that it requires the Higher Education Coordinating Council (HECC) to make certain recommendations to the Legislature regarding the roles that different public and private institutions in the state should play in providing access to higher education and the state’s economic development. It requests the HECC to make recommendations regarding institutional missions, output measures, degree-development approval processes, and funding. It requires the HECC’s report and recommendations to be submitted by December 31, 2011. The bill also provides that beginning with the 2012-2013 fiscal year, the state shall provide a uniform, per-student base funding amount for each medical school student enrolled at a state university. Currently, the per-student funding amount varies greatly from institution to institution.

Latest Action: *Approved as a committee bill by the House K-20 Innovation Subcommittee on March 22nd and filed as HB 7151 on March 24th.*

LINK TO SB 234: <http://capwiz.com/usfalumni/issues/alert/?alertid=35278501>