COMMITTEE WEEK ROUNDUP

Appropriations Conference Committees
Last week, House and Senate leadership appointed members from their respective chambers to the Joint Appropriations Conference Committees. These Committees, which are formed around each area of the budget (Education, Health and Human Services, Transportation, Tourism and Economic Development, Finance and Tax, Criminal and Civil Justice, Agriculture and Natural Resources, and General Government), met throughout the weekend and well into this week in an effort to resolve the differences that exist between the two chambers’ budget proposals.

The majority of budgetary issues were resolved during these meetings. However, issues that remained unresolved as of Tuesday afternoon at 5:00 PM were “bumped up” to the full House and Senate Joint Appropriations Conference Committee, which is chaired by Senator Negron and Representative McKeel. On Wednesday, Chairs Negron and McKeel began to iron out their remaining budgetary differences and come to a final agreement that will be suitable for passage in both chambers. The final budget agreement needs to be on Members’ desks for at least 72 hours before they can vote on final passage. As a result of this statutorily mandated timetable, a final budget agreement needs to be reached by Monday evening to provide adequate time for final passage before the end of session (sine die) on Friday, May 3, 2013.

The House and Senate remain divided on a handful of education issues, including a House-proposed tuition increase for SUS institutions and a House-proposed increase in sparsity funding for small school districts. As stated previously, there are a number of budgetary provisions that are of specific importance to FAU. Below is a list of FAU’s budgetary priorities and their current status in the process:

EDUCATION BUDGET

- Increased funding for Charles E. Schmidt College of Medicine – Agreed to by both the House and Senate
  - $500,000 in nonrecurring funding for medical school simulation center
  - $946,000 in recurring funding to assist in

BILLS IN BRIEF

HB 863 – Teacher Preparation and Accountability (Spano)
The measure revises the uniform core curricula for each state-approved educator preparation program. The bill requires individuals in postsecondary educator preparation programs who instruct or supervise field experience courses or internships where a student must demonstrate an impact on student learning growth to have specialized training in clinical supervision. The bill revises the reporting requirements of institutions that offer state–approved preparation programs.

Last Action: Placed on House Calendar, on 2nd reading.

SB 50 – Public Meetings (Negron)
The measure requires that a member of the public be given a reasonable opportunity to be heard by a board or commission before it takes official action on a proposition. The bill provides that a circuit court has jurisdiction to issue an injunction under certain circumstances. However, an action taken by a board or commission which is found in violation of this section is not void.

Last Action: The Senate passed the bill and it is awaiting action in the House.

SB 546 – Targeted Economic Development (Ring)
The measure expands the
the development of FAU’s graduate medical education program

- $7.5 million in total funding for the state’s 7 Centers for Autism and Related Disabilities (CARD) – Agreed to by both the House and Senate
  - This funding level represents an increase of over $2 million from the current fiscal year funding of $5.4 million
  - As the allocation formula is still being discussed it remains unclear what portion of the budgetary increase will be heading to FAU’s CARD Center
- $1.5 million for FAU/AMIkids, an experiential learning program funded through Pine Jog.
- $10 million increase in Sparsity Funding – pending negotiation by the House and Senate
  - Senator Abruzzo has proposed an amendment that would allow FAU’s Lab School District to qualify for sparsity funding for the first time in school history

**HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES BUDGET**

- $222,801 in recurring funds for the Louis and Anne Green Memory and Wellness Center (Memory Disorder Clinic) – Agreed to by both the House and Senate
  - The Center has never before received state operating funds

**AGRICULTURE, NATURAL RESOURCES, AND GENERAL GOVERNMENT BUDGET**

- $2 million in nonrecurring funds for the Indian River Lagoon Observatory (IRLO) Water Project – pending agreement by the House and Senate
  - The House and Senate have each agreed to include $2 million of nonrecurring funds for the IRLO Project
  - However, the chambers have yet to agree on a total budget figure for all water projects
  - Until a total project budget is agreed upon, the individual projects will not be finalized

While many FAU delegation members have spoken on behalf of FAU initiatives, Senators Negron, Sachs and Abruzzo have been instrumental in advocating for the University’s funding initiatives at the Conference level. The Office of University Relations will continue to monitor the appropriations process and provide the key provisions of the final budgetary agreement next week. You can view all of the conference documents and opposing budget offers below.

- Conference Committee Documents

**SB 878 – Data Warehouse (Galvano)**

The bill will require the DOE to reprioritize its use of existing funding to implement the new web-based interface and Research Engine of the K-20 data warehouse. Identifies authorized representatives and outlines specific guidelines regarding the Research Engine and prescribes specific duties of the Articulation Coordinating Committee, the Higher Education Coordinating Council, public and private postsecondary institutions, and the Commissioner of Education to streamline the data accessibility and reporting process.

Last Action: Passed by the Senate and House. The bill is currently being considered in Conference Committee.

**SB 1076 – K-20 Education (Legg)**

The measure revises educational programs and creates certain funding incentives to increase the likelihood that educational programs in Florida’s public schools, colleges, and universities will better prepare students for future occupations and careers. The bill designates three areas for university performance
Public Private Partnerships
On April 25, 2013, the House considered and passed HB 85, a bill relating to public private partnerships. The measure establishes a framework to govern the procurement process for public-private partnerships that will be applied to public purpose projects. Moreover, the legislation creates a Public Facilities and Infrastructure Act Guidelines Task Force to recommend guidelines for the Legislature to consider for public-private partnerships to foster uniformity across the state. The bill specifies the requirements for such partnerships, which include provisions that require responsible public entities to provide notice of unsolicited proposals, conduct independent analyses of proposed partnerships, notify other affected local jurisdictions, and enter into interim and comprehensive agreements for qualifying projects.

In addition, the legislation provides SUS institutions with increased flexibility to utilize their existing financial resources more effectively and without a fiscal impact. Specifically, the bill:

- Recognizes Public Private Partnerships as a construction alternative under the Revenue Bond section of Florida’s education statutes (1010.62);
- Allows education, academic and research space to be constructed with bondable funds;
- Allows the BOG to consider and approve, in conjunction with the Division of Bond Finance, multi-use facilities for construction with a mix of funding sources; and
- Does not increase any fees or provide any additional fees for bonding.

HB 85 is currently awaiting action in the Senate. You can read the amended bill text and staff analysis below.

University Developmental Research (Lab) Schools Millage Equivalent for Fixed Capital Outlay Projects
Lab schools receive a discretionary millage equivalent for capital outlay projects because lab schools are unable to tax their local districts. This allocation method and calculation is outlined in the developmental research schools statute (1002.32). Funds distributed to a lab school are expended on needed projects as supported by an educational plant survey that is required by the State Board of Education. These funds assist lab schools in providing sufficient and safe educational facilities in support of the academic programs provided for the students.

Currently, the state’s 6 lab schools receive approximately $4.2 million to fund their capital needs. However, the House’s FY2013-14 budget proposal would allocate only a $1 million for this important funding: computer and information technology; high-demand programs as identified by the Board of Governors (BOG) using a gap analysis; and cloud virtualization and related large data management. In addition, the bill Development of a Postsecondary Industry Certification Funding List for industry certifications that may be funded for school district workforce programs. Florida College System institutions, and state universities.

Last Action: Signed into law by Governor Scott on April 22, 2013.

SB 1720 – Education (Galvano)
The measure establishes the academic and research excellence standards for the Preeminent State Research Universities Program. The bill requires the state university that attains the highest level of excellence on the preeminence standards to create an institute for on-line learning. The legislation transitions the Degree Completion Pilot Program to a permanent degree completion program called Complete Florida Degree Program. In addition, the bill repeals the requirement that Bright Futures Scholarship recipients must file a Free Application for Student Financial Aid (FASFA) form.

Last Action: Passed by the Senate and House. The bill is currently being considered in Conference Committee.
budgetary line item. In addition, the House also has proposed a new allocation formula in their implementing bill (HB 5003) that would represent an even greater cut to lab school funding. Conversely, the Senate has proposed a small increase to the fixed capital outlay fund and their implementing language would keep the allocation formula the same.

The Office of University Relations is currently working with the other university lab schools (UF, FSU, and FAMU) to advocate for the Senate’s budgetary position and maximize funding for our Lab School.