



EDAA LEGISLATIVE REPORT – WEEK 10

Senate Passes Education Budget

The Senate passed the \$6.6 billion Education Trust Fund budget on Thursday, which would represent the largest budget approved by the legislature since 2008. The budget would be a \$216 million increase compared to the current year's budget and includes a 2.5% pay raise for teachers and school employees. While the Senate made a number of changes, the budget is not significantly different from the version passed by the House. The budget now goes back to the House, where they can either concur with the Senate changes or send it to conference, which is the likely choice.

House Passes General Fund Budget

The House passed the \$2 billion General Fund budget Tuesday, which represents an increase of \$167 million over the current budget.

Like the Education budget, the House made a number of small changes to the General Fund budget, but it is generally consistent with the version passed by the Senate. The budget now goes back to the Senate, where they can either concur with the House changes or send it to conference, which is the likely choice.

Governor Signs Tax Break into Law

SB76, sponsored by Senator Del Marsh, was signed into law Thursday, effectively giving many middle-to-low income Alabamians a tax cut by raising the maximum income threshold for exemptions. For single filers, heads of household, and married couples filing jointly, the threshold will increase from \$20,000 to \$23,000. For those who are married filing separately, the threshold will increase from \$10,000 to \$10,500.

Senate Committee Considers Economic Development Bill

The Senate Fiscal Responsibility and Economic Development Committee held a hearing on HB317 on Wednesday. The bill, which the House passed overwhelmingly last week, provides for additional accountability and transparency in the State's economic development statutes. The bill also clarifies that certain economic development professionals are not lobbyists as defined in Alabama's Ethics Law. The bill is strongly supported by the State Department of Commerce and local economic developers. The committee heard from a number of officials, including Ethics Commission Chairman Jerry Fielding, who indicated the Ethics Commission supports the proposed clarification to the law. The bill should be voted on by the committee next week.

Day Care Bill Goes to Governor's Desk

The Senate approved the Child Care Safety Act on Thursday. The bill would require some for-profit religious day cares and those that receive federal or state funding to be licensed by the Alabama Department of Human Resources and adhere to minimum safety standards. Those day cares not receiving federal or state funding would remain exempt, but would have to submit proof of fire and safety inspections and background checks on workers.

House Unanimously Passes Property Tax Reform

The House passed HB354 Thursday by a vote of 96-0. The bill would give county tax collectors the option to end the practice of allowing overbids by investors in the event taxes on a property go unpaid. The proposed legislation would also allow the county to sell the property to the bidder with the lowest interest rate instead of the 12% standard rate. Representative Corley Ellis (R-Columbiana), the sponsor of the bill, said that the owner would have up to three years to redeem the property and, after that point, the loan holder would have the option to foreclose. The bill now moves to the Senate for consideration.

House Passes Clarification of Ethics Law

The House passed HB387 Tuesday 67-0 with 26 abstentions. The bill attempts to clarify how lawmakers accept consulting contracts under the 2010 Alabama ethics law. HB387 would require legislators to notify the Alabama Ethics Commission in the event they enter into a consulting agreement in an area that is outside their normal scope of work. The bill now moves to the Senate for consideration.

House Unanimously Passes School Resource Officer Bill

The House passed HB236 Tuesday by a vote of 94-0. The bill would allow retired law enforcement officers with at least 20 years of experience and who retired in good standing to become school resource officers (SRO) without having to attend the police academy again. The bill's sponsor, Representative Phillip Pettus (R-Killen), said that while the former law enforcement officers would not have to attend the academy again, they would still have to qualify at the gun range and perform other SRO training requirements. The experience threshold in HB236 was originally set at 25 years but was lowered to 20 years via an amendment by Representative Ralph Howard (D-Greensboro). The bill now moves to the Senate for consideration.

House Passes Juvenile Detention Reform

The House passed a bill Thursday that would limit the number of offenses that results in juveniles being put into detention in an effort to keep low-level offenders out of Department of Youth Services (DYS) custody. The bill, which passed 69-20 after hours of heated debate, would limit which cases automatically qualify for adult court to those involving capital offenses, murder, rape with a deadly weapon and robbery with a deadly weapon. The bill comes in the wake of recommendations made in the December 2017 Alabama Juvenile Justice Task Force report, which revealed that nearly two-thirds of the juveniles in DHS custody in 2016 did not commit a felony. The proposed legislation would also require a formal risk and needs

assessment that would allow judges and juvenile probation officers to divert children from detention, and it would reinvest \$35 million over the next five years into community-based intervention programs. The funding would be in addition to \$1 million approved in next year's budget for juvenile justice reform. The bill now moves to the Senate, where the Judiciary Committee is expected to consider the bill on Tuesday in an effort to get it to a floor vote next week.

Committee Approves Bill to Arm Teachers

The House Public Safety and Homeland Security Committee approved a bill this week by a vote of 5-4 that would give school districts the option to allow armed teachers in schools. The bill would not mandate that districts arm teachers and would allow districts to decide whether to enter the program. The proposal would require a minimum of 40 hours of training and an assessment by law enforcement for any disqualifying conditions, including mental health issues, and would require annual firearms training for the armed teachers. Local school districts would set the standards for gun storage and additional training requirements. Parents of students at schools with armed teachers would not be told that the school has armed teachers, and there would be no public information regarding which schools have armed teachers. "Authorized weapons" that an armed teacher would carry could include pistols, shotguns, or rifles. The bill can now move to the full House for consideration.

Committee Approves Racial Profiling Bill

The House Judiciary Committee approved a bill by voice vote this week that would require police agencies to keep records regarding traffic stops in an effort to address racial profiling. The bill would mandate that police agencies report to the attorney general's (AG) office statistics regarding traffic stops, including:

- The race, age, and gender of the driver
- The race, age, and gender of the officer
- The nature of the alleged violation
- Whether the stop involved an arrest, ticket, warning, or search

Under the proposed legislation, if the AG's office determined that an agency was engaging in racial profiling, it could withhold certain funding sources until the agency completed training to prohibit profiling. The bill would also require the AG's office to create a form that can be used by people who believe they have been the victim of racial profiling and wish to file a complaint.

Legislative Tracking Report

[AL - HB97 Transportation network companies, Public Service Commission permit required to operate, minimum requirements imposed](#)

Last Action: Read for the first time and referred to the House of Representatives committee on Commerce and Small Business (January 9, 2018)

Primary Sponsor: [Representative David Faulkner \(R\)](#)

AL - HB173 Ad valorem taxes, co. commission authorized to abate taxes for Class III property taxed at current use when converted to other taxable use for projects under Ala. Jobs Act, consent of municipality if in corporate limits, Sec. 40-7-25.4 added

Last Action: Read for the first time and referred to the House of Representatives committee on Economic Development and Tourism (January 11, 2018)

Primary Sponsor: [Representative Danny Crawford \(R\)](#)

AL - HB190 Transportation network companies, Public Service Commission permit required to operate, minimum requirements imposed

Last Action: Clerk of the House Certification (February 15, 2018)

Primary Sponsor: [Representative David Faulkner \(R\)](#)

Amendments:

[190833-1](#)

AL - HB317 Economic Development, notification and confidentiality provisions revised for certain economic incentives, State Industrial Development Authority, bonds for industrial development and site preparation, auth., Alabama Jobs Enhancement Act, Secs. 41-29-501 to 41-29-507, inclusive, added; Sec. 41-29-3 am'd.

Last Action: Read for the first time and referred to the Senate committee on Fiscal Responsibility and Economic Development (March 6, 2018)

Primary Sponsor: [Representative Ken Johnson \(R\)](#)

Scheduled Hearing:

[Fiscal Responsibility and Economic Development \(Senate\)](#)

Date: March 21, 2018

Time: TBA (CDT)

Location: Room 727

AL - HB430 Commerce, recapture benefit extended to call centers that relocate out of state

Last Action: Read for the second time and placed on the calendar 1 amendment (March 8, 2018)

Primary Sponsor: [Representative Phil Williams \(R\)](#)

AL - HB494 Taxation, tax abatements, authorized for data processing centers, extended for five years, Sec. 40-9B-4.1 amd.

Last Action: Read for the first time and referred to the Senate committee on Finance and Taxation Education (March 15, 2018)

Primary Sponsor: [Representative Nathaniel Ledbetter \(R\)](#)

AL - SB65 Transportation network companies, Public Service Commission permit required to operate, minimum requirements imposed

Last Action: Read for the first time and referred to the Senate committee on Transportation and Energy (January 9, 2018)

Primary Sponsor: [Senator Bobby D. Singleton \(D\)](#)

AL - SB98 Ad valorem taxes, co. commission authorized to abate taxes for Class III property taxed at current use when converted to other taxable use for projects under Ala. Jobs Act, consent of municipality if in corporate limits, Sec. 40-7-25.4 added

Last Action: Enrolled (January 30, 2018)

Primary Sponsor: [Senator Arthur Orr \(R\)](#)

AL - SB143 Transportation network companies, Public Service Commission permit required to operate, minimum requirements imposed

Last Action: Read for the second time and placed on the calendar 1 amendment (February 1, 2018)

Primary Sponsor: [Senator Bobby D. Singleton \(D\)](#)

AL - SB187 Tax credits, exemptions, deductions, enacted in 2019 Reg. Sess., or thereafter, expiration within seven years from effective date, const. amend.

Last Action: Read for the first time and referred to the Senate committee on Fiscal Responsibility and Economic Development (January 16, 2018)

Primary Sponsor: [Senator Bill Hightower \(R\)](#)

AL - SB356 Taxation, businesses, income tax credit to a business that loses an employee to another business receiving any economic tax incentive from state government

Last Action: Read for the second time and placed on the calendar 1 amendment (March 8, 2018)

Primary Sponsor: [Senator Paul Sanford \(R\)](#)

AL - SB379 Taxation, tax abatements, authorized for data processing centers, extended for five years, Sec. 40-9B-4.1 amd.

Last Action: Read for the second time and placed on the calendar (March 15, 2018)

Primary Sponsor: [Senator J. T. "Jabo" Waggoner \(R\)](#)