

Legislative UPDATE

Vol. 6 No. 2

2003 Regular Session

March 17, 2003

Current News About Legislative Issues Affecting The University of Alabama System

HIGHER ED DAY A TREMENDOUS SUCCESS

GOVERNOR AND STATE LEADERS EXPRESS SUPPORT FOR HIGHER EDUCATION

MESSAGE OF SUPPORT FOR HIGHER ED FUNDING RESOUNDS IN THE CAPITOL

A crowd estimated by the Higher Education Partnership at 2,000 gathered outside the Alabama State House Thursday for a rousing rally to support Alabama's public colleges and universities. The large contingent of students, faculty, staff, alumni, and business leaders heard from Governor Bob Riley, Lt. Governor Lucy Baxley, House Speaker Seth Hammett (D-Andalusia), Senate President Pro Tem Lowell Barron (D-Fyffe), Senate Minority Leader Jabo Waggoner (R-Birmingham), Senate Finance and Taxation Chair Hank Sanders (D-Selma), House Education Finance Chair Richard Lindsey (D-Centre), and Bill O'Connor of the Campaign for Alabama.

Calling the gathering "the most impressive group of people I have ever seen," Governor Riley said, "Every time we invest in Higher Education as an economic development model, we get a leveraged return that is unmatched by any other economic opportunity. That is what we have got to do here now." Tax reform was a theme of the day, as lawmakers consistently indicated a package of reform bills will be introduced during this session. Riley urged the crowd to keep up the momentum and make the voice of higher education heard in the State House during the months ahead.

NO ACTION YET ON EDUCATION BUDGET

As expected, nothing is happening yet on the budget front, as the Legislature and the Governor await reports from the Governor's commissions charged with studying education funding and recommending effective solutions. Governor Riley continues to pledge that a solution will be found – encouraging news for the entire education community, K-Ph.D. Riley also assures us that higher education will be treated fairly and equitably.

UA SYSTEM TRUSTEES CONFIRMED FRIDAY

The elections of five UA System Trustees were confirmed Friday by the Alabama Senate. Newly elected Board members Vanessa Leonard, Finis St. John IV, and James Wilson III, as well as veteran Trustees elected to new six-year terms, Peter Lowe and John Russell Thomas, were unanimously approved by the Senate Confirmations Committee yesterday, and faced no opposition on the Senate floor today. We especially want to thank the following Senators who stood tall for our Trustees throughout the confirmation process: Chairman E.B. McLain (D-Brighton), Larry Means (D-Gadsden), Sundra Escott (D-Birmingham), Pat Lindsey (D-Butler), Zeb Little (D-Cullman), Del Marsh (R-Anniston), Hinton Mitchem (D-Albertville), Phil Poole (D-Tuscaloosa), Hank Sanders (D-Selma), Harri Anne Smith (R-Slocomb), and Jeff Enfinger (D-Huntsville).

CONTACT INFORMATION

Bill Jones/334-242-2262

Porter Banister/205-934-5193

Gary Smith/256-824-6084

For a copy of this newsletter click this link: <http://www.uasystem.ua.edu/> click the Legislative Update link and then the March 17, 2003 link.