

Legislative UPDATE

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Current News About Legislative Issues Affecting The University of Alabama System

Contact Legislators Before Session Resumes On Tuesday!!

Support 2:1 Split in Education Trust Fund

SENATORS AND REPRESENTATIVES NEED TO HEAR FROM YOU NOW!

With just 10 Legislative days remaining in what has been a low-key session until now, it is time to call and write your Senators and Representatives before they take important actions on the Education budget. Following another successful Higher Ed Day rally, Legislators are expecting to hear from you about the need to restore the 2:1 split in the 2002-03 Education Budget. Every call will help make the difference!

It is critical that the 2:1 split be applied in distributing all new dollars in the education budget. Governor Siegelman promised to recommend that one-third of growth in the ETF go to Higher Ed this year; instead, his budget proposal gives us only 28%. With election-year jitters rampant, state leaders can be persuaded to meet their commitments to Higher Ed – telephone call to their home offices, faxes and personal letters received before the session resumes Tuesday, March 12, will be well timed and persuasive.

Your message: **The 2:1 split of all new money in the education budget is fair and equitable.**

This measure will dominate Legislative action beginning Tuesday. Your help is needed now to help our universities get their fair share. Please call or visit your Legislator today!

CAR TAG INCREASE WOULD HURT CAMPUS SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAMS

Urge your legislators to stop House Bill 343 and Senate Bill 75, measures to increase the cost of UA, UAB and UAH scholarship car tags by adding an additional \$15 per tag.

The current cost per tag is \$50, with proceeds going directly into scholarship programs that provide millions of dollars of student aid to our System campuses and to other schools statewide. This bill would increase the tag cost to \$65, with the extra \$15 going to the General Fund in support of the State Department of Corrections.

This is a thinly-disguised tax plan that would hurt our students. In these lean financial times, consumers will be less likely to buy the higher-priced tags and scholarship funds will be reduced. Please contact members of the House and Senate now to ask them to oppose House Bill 343 and Senate Bill 75.

OUT-OF-STATE TUITION BILL DEFEATED: VICTORY FOR UA SYSTEM STUDENTS, FACULTY

Your Senators stood tall last week to defeat a bill that would have given the regional universities the go-ahead to charge in-state tuition to all out-of-state students. As you know, Alabama law requires that we charge at least twice the in-state rate to students from outside Alabama. Evident by healthy out-of-state enrollments at UA,

UAB and UAH, students from throughout the U.S. recognize the value of a degree from our universities – and are more than willing to pay current tuition and fee rates.

The bill, introduced by Senator Gerald Dial of Lineville, was simply bad business – asking Alabama taxpayers to subsidize the education of out-of-state students at the expense of our already strained budgets.

Senators who stood tall for our universities on this issue: Armistead, Barron, Bedford, Biddle, Butler, Dixon, Enfinger, Escott-Russell, French, Lee, Ted Little; Marsh; McClain, Poole, Preuitt, Roberts, Sanders, Smitherman and Waggoner.

Senators who voted against our position: Callahan, Denton, Dial, Holley, Langford, Lindsey, Lipscomb, Zeb Little, Means, Mitchell, Myers, and Smith.

Please thank all those who supported The University of Alabama System in this crucial vote. We appreciate their help!

ELECTION YEAR ADVANTAGE

House and Senate members will return home in a few weeks to begin campaigning. Now more than ever it is essential that we all support candidates who support Higher Ed.

Please exercise your right as a taxpayer by contacting your Legislator now. For a current list of your Legislators and how to reach them: www.legislature.state.al.us/misc/zipsearch.html Please use your personal resources when contacting elected officials.

Finally, be sure that you, your family and friends are all registered voters in Alabama. Voter registration forms are available today on your campus through your Government Relations office listed below.

CONTACT INFORMATION

UA: Bill Jones/205-348-4771 or 334-242-2262

UAB: Wayne Echols/205-934-5193

UAH: Gary Smith/256-824-6084

For a copy of this newsletter click this link: www.uasystem.ua.edu/SystemAdmin/sys_relations.htm and then click the Legislative Update – March 8, 2002 link.