
THE UNIVERSITY OF ALABAMA SYSTEM

Legislative UPDATE

Vol. 10 No. 2

2009 Regular Session

February 11, 2009

Current News About Legislative Issues Affecting The University of Alabama System

GOVERNOR'S PROPOSED BUDGET SLICES UNIVERSITIES

Governor Riley's budget proposal for 2009-2010, released late last week, continues to paint a bleak picture for Higher Ed. For the UA System, the Governor's budget translates to funding of \$482,499,462, a cut of **3.16% below** the prorated 2008-2009 level. The **O&M lines for all three campuses are reduced by 2.93%** in the Riley budget (House Bill 418).

These additional cuts in our 2009-2010 budgets represent a **whopping reduction in state support** for the UA System over the past two years. If these reductions are approved by the Legislature, the three campuses will have lost 25% of our state appropriation between 2008 and 2010!

In comparison, the total K-12 cut amounts to 2.63%. The two-year colleges are reduced 3.37% overall. For a detailed picture, see the full spreadsheet at <http://budget.alabama.gov/pdf/etf/ETF2010.pdf>

WHAT'S NEXT?

The Governor's budget has moved to the House and Senate Appropriations Committees. Committee Chairs Richard Lindsey in the House and Hank Sanders on the Senate side have said publicly **no action will be taken** until later in the session when we get a clearer picture of available revenues and funds designated for Alabama in the Federal stimulus package.

EQUAL TREATMENT IS OUR MESSAGE TO LAWMAKERS

During this Legislative session, we have one simple message for our House and Senate members: funding for education at **all levels MUST be equitable and equality MUST be a top priority**. Universities must be treated **fairly** in the budget process if we are to continue meeting the demand for the qualified workforce needed so Alabama can grow its way out of this economic downturn.

FEDERAL ECONOMIC STIMULUS PACKAGE

The Federal economic stimulus bill should be finalized within the next few days. The House bill provides about \$79 billion to the states over two years to stabilize state budgets and address education funding gaps. The Senate bill calls for \$40 billion. An additional \$20 billion in direct financing for school renovation, repair and modernization at both K-12 and higher education institutions is included in the House bill but eliminated in the Senate version.

Both versions of the stimulus package provide for a significant increase in two programs of major importance to our students: Pell Grants and the Perkins Loan Program. Differences in the final dollar figures for both will be resolved in conference.

HIGHER ED DAY: MARCH 5

Make plans now to be in Montgomery on March 5 for Higher Ed Day – time-tested as the single most effective opportunity for thousands of university students, faculty, staff and supporters to deliver a focused message to state lawmakers.

STAY INFORMED – GET INVOLVED

Call your legislators today to let them know how critically important equitable funding is for Alabama's future. (For contact information: <http://www.legislature.state.al.us/misc/zipsearch.html> and enter your nine-digit zip code.)

The key message: **Higher education must be treated equitably in whatever budget finally passes for FY 2009-2010.**

The UA System Government Relations staff will continue to keep you informed on legislative happenings. Please do your part. Be prepared to act when called upon to contact legislators, the Governor and others who can help benefit our universities.

CONTACT INFORMATION

If you have questions or need additional information, please contact members of the UA System Government Relations Team:

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