



2018 Legislative Report- Week 6

House Passes Education Budget and Teacher Pay Raise; Heads to the Senate

The full House unanimously passed the FY 2019 education budget on Tuesday. The budget allocates \$6.6 billion in funding, which is an increase of \$216 million from the 2018 budget and is the highest funding level since 2008. The budget includes:

- \$4.1 billion for K-12 (\$114 million increase)
- A 2.5 percent teacher pay raise, which would be the first pay raise for teachers since 2016
- An increase of \$37 million for higher education
- An increase of \$20.7 million for the state Pre-K program
- A \$5 million increase for the Alabama Reading Initiative
- \$500,000 for Governor Ivey's "Strong Start, Strong Finish" initiative

General Fund Budget Approved by Senate Committee; Moves to Senate Floor

The Senate Finance and Taxation General Fund Committee approved the General Fund Budget on Wednesday. The Department of Corrections would receive a \$50 million increase. The additional funding is expected to help the Department address prisoner health care and mental health services and increase dangerously-low staffing levels in the system. State employees would also see a pay raise of 3 percent. The General Fund Budget proposal now heads to the full Senate for consideration.

Attorney General Introduces Data Breach Legislation

SB 318 and HB 410 were introduced this week at the request of Attorney General Steve Marshall. The intent of the legislation is to require companies and other entities to notify affected individuals when their personal information has been compromised, and to provide for penalties if the entity fails to notify. Interested parties, including many in the business community, have been working through concerns related to this bill for multiple years. If you are interested in this legislation, we would encourage you to read the bill, which may be found here:

<http://alisondb.legislature.state.al.us/ALISON/SearchableInstruments/2018RS/PrintFiles/SB318-int.pdf>.

Deadline to Qualify for Elections Passes

The deadline to qualify for legislative and executive branch races was last Friday. Lists of the candidates who qualified can be found at the links below, provided by the Alabama Daily News.

- Statewide constitutional offices and Congress: <http://www.aldailynews.com/primary/list-qualified-candidates-statewide-congressional-races/>

- State Senate: <http://www.aldailynews.com/primary/15022/>
- State House of Representatives: <http://www.aldailynews.com/primary/house-qualified/>

Other items that may be of interest:

Lawmaker Planning to Introduce School Gun Bill

Representative Will Ainsworth (R-Guntersville) is planning to introduce legislation that would allow teachers to carry concealed firearms at school if they are trained to a state standard. The bill would require teachers to receive firearms training from the Alabama Peace Officers Standards and Training Commission, although carrying a firearm would be voluntary. Ainsworth says the bill would provide teachers and administrators the ability to act in the event an active shooter is on campus, citing the time it would naturally take for law enforcement to arrive on the scene. Opponents, such as Senator Cam Ward (R-Alabaster), contend that arming teachers could introduce new dangers and confuse law enforcement upon their arrival.

House Passes Church Protection Bill; Senate to Debate Next

After considerable debate, HB 34 was approved by the House on Thursday by a vote of 40-16. The Alabama Church Protection Act would effectively add churches to Alabama's "stand your ground" law by providing legal protection for someone who uses force to defend himself, church members, employees and volunteers from death, serious injury, robbery and other crimes. The bill now moves to the Senate for consideration.

Senate Committee Approves Ethics Bill

The Senate Committee on Constitution, Ethics and Elections reported favorably a bill Thursday that would allow for increased Ethics Commission oversight of certain consulting contracts entered into by lawmakers. The bill as it stands now would require a company or person looking to hire a member of the Legislature for consulting work to notify the Commission prior to paying the member in the event the consulting work is outside the member's "regular profession or line of business." The bill would place the burden on companies to report the contracts and would not place any requirements on lawmakers to report such contracts prior to accepting a payment. The proposal now moves to the Senate floor for consideration.

Voter Registration Bill Clears Senate Committee

A bill passed out of committee Thursday that would allow voting registration up to and including the day of an election. Under current law, Alabama voters must register at least two weeks in advance of an election, but the bill introduced by Senator Hank Sanders (D-Selma) would allow voters to register during the two-week period on any day that county boards of registrars maintain office hours. The full Senate will now have the opportunity to debate the proposal.

Committee Passes Special Elections Bill

Legislation to change the law regarding special elections for US Senate vacancies cleared a Senate committee on Thursday after passing the House last month by a vote of 65-29. The bill would require the governor to set the election to fill such a vacancy to coincide with the next statewide general election. In the event of a vacancy, the bill would allow the governor to

appoint a replacement who would stand for election at the next regularly scheduled statewide election instead of at an earlier special election. The proposed change seeks to clarify the ambiguous and undefined “forthwith” clause found in Alabama’s existing special election laws. Representative Steve Clouse (R-Ozark), who sponsored the bill, has emphasized the cost savings associated with not having to hold a separate statewide election. Senator Gerald Dial (R-Lineville) will sponsor the bill as it moves to the full Senate for consideration.

Bill to Allow Nurses Signatory Ability Clears Senate Committee

The Senate Health Committee unanimously passed SB46 on Wednesday, which would allow nurse practitioners to sign certain medical documents that currently can only be signed by physicians. The bill would allow doctors to grant document-signing authority to nurse practitioners subject to their collaborative agreement. The bill now moves to the Senate for consideration.

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 second time and placed on the calendar 1 amendment (February 1, 2018)

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

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 \(R\)](#)