



LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

A Briefing for Faculty & Staff of the University System of Georgia No. 15, June 16, 2010

“Creating a More Educated Georgia”

2010 Legislative Session Wrap-Up

On June 8, Gov. Sonny Perdue finished signing into law hundreds of bills passed during the 2010 legislative session of the Georgia General Assembly. The last piece of legislation he put his signature to was House Bill 948, the state’s Fiscal Year 2011 budget, totaling \$17.9 billion.

The Governor noted that the final budget was reduced by more than \$300 million since he made his recommendations to the legislature in January and is \$3.5 billion less than the original FY 2008 budget recommendation.

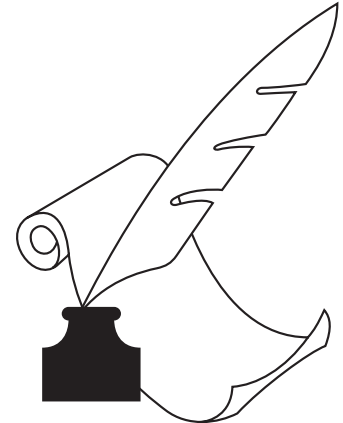
The Governor’s signature makes official the inclusion in the FY 2011 budget of \$113 million in formula funding for the University System of Georgia (USG), \$900,000 to enable the Board of Regents to continue efforts to expand physician education in Georgia and \$60 million in Major Repair and Renovation (MRR) funding with which to maintain USG facilities.

Two bond projects from the University System’s FY 2011 capital budget were vetoed – \$6.4 million in 20-year bonds to finance infrastructure expansion at Kennesaw State University (KSU) and \$140,000 in 20-year bonds to fund the purchase of land for the completion of the Greene County Library in Greensboro.

With these two vetoes, the USG is receiving \$177 million in capital projects for FY 2011.

In May, Perdue signed House Bill 947, the Amended FY 2010 budget. The Amended 2010 budget totals \$17.1 billion, a \$1.5 billion reduction from the original FY 2010 budget.

A summary of the disposition of other key pieces of legislation of interest to the USG follows:



HB 1128 **carry-forward legisla-** **tion – signed May 28**

This legislation, sponsored by Rep. Earl Ehrhart, permits the USG and the Technical College System of Georgia to carry forward funds from one year to the next, plus a percentage of the annual tuition revenues they collect.

SB 308, concealed **weapons bill – signed** **June 8**

This law, which took effect immediately, makes the following changes regarding guns on USG campuses:

- ◆ eliminates the 1,000-foot buffer (the school safety zone now extends only to the boundary lines of the campus);
- ◆ allows a person with a valid license to

keep a weapon in his or her parked car on campus or when transiting through campus;

- ◆ allows a person with a valid license to keep a weapon in his or her possession or in a locked compartment or firearm rack when picking up or dropping off a student; and
- ◆ reduces the penalty for carrying a weapon within a school

safety zone from a felony to a misdemeanor for those who are licensed to carry a weapon.

HB 1090, Agrirama **– signed in May**

This legislation transferred the Agrirama, Georgia’s Museum of Agriculture in Tifton, to the University System of Georgia, where it will become part of the campus of *Abraham Baldwin Agricultural College*.

Legislative Wrap-Up

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HB 700 – failed to pass and is now considered dead

This legislation would have shifted oversight of the construction of all USG and TCSG buildings to the same state agency that supervises construction of other government structures, the Georgia State Financing and Investment Commission.

Other Legislation of Interest

HB 400, The “BRIDGE” Act – signed May 20

This legislation seeks to individualize students’ career paths and to encourage earlier career planning, to

promote technical high schools and increased concentration on vocational programs and skills.

SB 447, design and construction of state facilities – signed May 20

This legislation establishes a definition for resident businesses and implements a retaliatory preference for all Georgia state agencies and requires them to adhere to the policies and procedures contained in the State Construction Manual for the procurement of and contracting for design and construction of state facilities.

HB 1405, Tax Reform Council – signed June 1

This legislation creates the Special Council on Tax Reform and Fairness for Georgians. In addition to the Governor, members of the council will include Dr. David Sjoquist of *Georgia State University*, Dr. Jeffrey Humphreys of the *University of Georgia* and Dr. Christine Ries of *Georgia Tech*, who will conduct a study of the state’s current revenue structure. The Council will make a recommendation to the Special Joint Committee on Georgia Revenue Structure, which will then write a bill to be voted on by

the General Assembly without amendments.

HB 23, texting while driving – signed June 4

This new law prohibits texting and the use of cell phones for drivers under 18 years of age.

SB 360, texting while driving – signed June 4

This new law prohibits all drivers from texting while driving and establishes a one-point violation for doing so. 🏠