



LEGISLATIVE UPDATE


A Briefing for Faculty & Staff of the University System of Georgia No. 11, March 24, 2009

“Creating a More Educated Georgia”

Retirement Bills Under Consideration

Lawmakers have introduced legislation intended to permit University System of Georgia faculty members who participate in the Regents’ Optional Retirement Plan (ORP) to purchase service in the Teachers Retirement System of Georgia (TRS).

House Bill 740, sponsored by Rep. **Bob Smith** of Watkinsville, and its counterpart, Senate Bill 257, sponsored by Sen. **Don Balfour** of Snellville, were introduced in mid-March. As with all retirement bills with a fiscal impact, they must be introduced in the first year of the biennium and be eligible for study and review over the summer and fall before any action can be taken in the second year of the biennium.

The bills stipulate that the decision to participate in the TRS in lieu of the ORP shall be revocable and that service earned shall be transferable. 


FY 2010 Budget Moves From House to Senate

The Fiscal Year 2010 Budget approved by the Georgia House of Representatives on March 18 contains an additional reduction of \$15.3 million to the budgets of University System of Georgia (USG) campuses, a \$1 million reduction in the formula request (from \$109 million to \$108 million) plus a \$2.1 million reduction to the budget of the University System Office. The additional reductions total nearly \$18.4 million.

“We will certainly seek the restoration of these funds,” **Chancellor Erroll B. Davis Jr.** told the regents in a letter about the House vote. “These amounts represent an additional reduction of approximately 1 percent at a time when applications are in record numbers in the University System. If the cuts hold, the total reduction for the University System institutions will be approximately \$235 million in formula funding.”

Davis added, “We have concerns about the funding for critical capital projects that have either been deleted or reduced, as well as the reduction of Major Repair and Rehabilitation (MRR) funds from \$70 million to \$60 million. The FY 2010 Budget will now move to the Senate, and we are working with the Senate to add funding for the key priorities on our capital list for the University System.”

The House Appropriations Committee’s reductions to the USG’s FY 2010 capital budget included:

- ◆ a \$6.2 million reduction in the construction budget for an academic facility at *Gainesville State College*;
- ◆ \$2.1 million to design a new science building at *Clayton State University*;
- ◆ \$1.8 million to design the Ray Charles Fine Arts Center at *Albany State University*; and
- ◆ \$1.6 million slated for strategic property acquisition at *Darton College*. 

- ◆ \$13.4 million to renovate *Fort Valley State University’s* historic Huntington Hall;

Tick, Tick: Remaining Days of the Session

Legislative Day 36	Wednesday, March 25
Legislative Day 37	Thursday, March 26
Legislative Day 38	Monday, March 30
Legislative Day 39	Wednesday, April 1
Legislative Day 40	Friday, April 3