



# The ACCS Legislative Update

2017 Legislative Session Update #2017-01

February 10, 2017

## And So It Begins...

The Alabama Legislature convened at 12:00 PM on Tuesday, February 7, 2017, for the 2017 Regular Legislative Session. At 6:30 PM, the Legislature held a Joint Session to hear Governor Robert Bentley's State of the State address. Included in Governor Bentley's agenda is an increase of \$20 million for the First Class Pre-K program, increases in funding for autism treatment and healthcare services for low-income residents in rural areas of the state, the creation of a task force to study removing the sales tax on groceries, and an \$800 million bond issue to build four new large prisons and close most existing prisons across Alabama. Projections by the Finance Department and Legislative Fiscal Office show that while revenues to the Education Trust Fund are expected to grow by over \$200 million in Fiscal Year 2018, only \$90 million of that amount will be available for appropriation in the education budget due to the Appropriation Cap created in the Rolling Reserve Act several years ago, adding up to approximately \$6.4 billion available to be appropriated in the education budget. The remaining funds would go into reserve accounts (the Budget Stabilization Fund and the Advancement and Technology Fund).

The Legislature met Tuesday and Thursday of this week introducing 351 bills (184 in the House and 167 in the Senate). Two of those bills, Senate Bill 114 and House Bill 163, are our "Body Corporate" legislation that is included in the 2017 ACCS Legislative Agenda. The Legislature will reconvene for the third Legislative Day Tuesday, February 14, 2016 with the House going into session at 1 PM and the Senate at 2 PM.

The ACCS Legislative Update will be distributed each week during the 2017 Legislative Session. Please track legislation through the Government Relations page of the ACCS website - <https://www.accs.cc/index.cfm/departments-services/government-relations/>.

## Bills of Interest:

### **SB114/HB163 – Sen. Pittman/Rep. McMillan:**

To establish the Community College System as a body corporate and give the Board of Trustees authority to manage the acquisition and disposition of property (Senate Education and Youth Affairs Committee / House Education Policy Committee)

### **SB153/HB97 – Sen. Singleton/Rep. Collins:**

To create the Alabama Network of Statewide Workforce and Education-Related Statistics (ANSWERS) for Alabama (Longitudinal Data System) within the Dept. of Labor to provide for the matching of information about students from early learning through postsecondary education and into employment (Senate Governmental Affairs Committee / House Education Policy Committee)

### **SB129/HB171 – Sen. Orr/Rep. Poole:**

To make appropriations for the support, maintenance, and development of public education – the Education Budget (Senate Finance & Taxation Education Committee / House Ways and Means Education Committee)

### **SB3/HB35 – Sen. Dial/Rep. Ford:**

To provide a one-time lump sum retirement payment to education retirees from appropriation from Education Trust Fund (Senate Finance and Taxation Education Committee / House Ways and Means Education Committee)

### **HB177 – Rep. Pettus:**

To create the Public Employees' Health Insurance Board to govern the Public Education Employees Health Insurance Plan and the State Employees' Health Insurance Plan (House Ways and Means Education Committee)

### **HB100 – Rep. Phil Williams:**

Americans First Act, to require public colleges and institutions of higher education to comply with state and federal immigration laws, including the Beason-Hammon Alabama Taxpayer and Citizen Protection Act, or be subject to forfeiture of certain funds (*passed out of the House State Government Committee 2/8/17; awaiting action on House floor*)

### **SB92 – Sen. Orr:**

To formally authorize dual enrollment programs in state law and set definitions and guidelines, including requirements and responsibilities of the local boards of education, the Department of Education, and colleges and institutions of higher education (Senate Finance and Taxation Education Committee)

### **SB101 – Sen. Orr:**

To prohibit public colleges and universities, local boards of education, and public schools from using public funds or property to advocate for or against statewide or local ballot measures (Senate Education and Youth Affairs Committee)

