

THE FLORIDA LEGISLATURE



May 6, 2009

The Honorable Jeff Atwater
President of the Senate

The Honorable Larry Cretul
Speaker, House of Representatives

Dear Mr. President and Mr. Speaker:

Your Conference Committee on the disagreeing votes of the two houses on CS/CS/SB 1696, same being:

An act relating to higher education funding

having met, and after full and free conference, do recommend to their respective houses as follows:

1. That the House of Representatives recede from its Amendment 1.
2. That the Senate and House of Representatives adopt the Conference Committee Amendment attached hereto, and by reference made a part of this report.

Managers on the part of the Senate

Senator JD Alexander, Chair

Senator Thad Altman, At Large

Senator Carey Baker

Senator Larcenia J. Bullard

Senator Victor D. Crist

Senator Nancy C. Detert

Senator Paula Dockery

Senator Don Gaetz

Senator Andy Gardiner

Senator Mike Haridopolos, At Large

Senator Dennis L. Jones, D.C.

Senator Charlie Justice

Senator Alfred "Al" Lawson, Jr., At Large

Senator Steve Oelrich

Senator Ken Pruitt

Senator Garrett S. Richter

Senator Gary Siplin

Senator Eleanor Sobel

Senator J. Alex Villalobos

Senator Stephen R. Wise

Senator Ted Deutch, Vice Chair

Senator Dave Aronberg

Senator Michael S. "Mike" Bennett

Senator Lee Constantine

Senator Charles S. "Charlie" Dean, Sr.

Senator Alex Diaz de la Portilla

Senator Mike Fasano

Senator Rudy Garcia

Senator Dan Gelber

Senator Anthony C. "Tony" Hill, Sr.

Senator Arthenia L. Joyner

Senator James E. "Jim" King, Jr.

Senator Evelyn J. Lynn

Senator Durell Peaden, Jr.

Senator Nan H. Rich

Senator Jeremy Ring

Senator Christopher L. "Chris" Smith

Senator Ronda Storms

Senator Frederica S. Wilson

Managers on the part of the House of Representatives

Representative David Rivera, Chair

Representative Sandra Adams

Representative Kevin C. Ambler

Representative Gary Aubuchon

Representative Ellyn Setnor Bogdanoff, At Large

Representative Debbie Boyd

Representative Oscar Braynon II

Representative Dwight M. Bullard

Representative Dean Cannon, At Large

Representative Gwyndolen Clarke-Reed

Representative Steve Crisafulli

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Representative Marcelo Llorente, Chair

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Representative Esteban L. Bovo, Jr.

Representative Mary Brandenburg

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Representative Jennifer Carroll

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Representative Faye B. Culp

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Representative Anitere Flores

Representative Erik Fresen

Representative Bill Galvano, At Large

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Representative Richard Glorioso

Representative Adam Hasner, At Large

Representative Bill Heller

Representative Ed Homan

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Representative Dorothy L. Hukill

Representative Kurt Kelly

Representative Paige Kreegel

Representative Janet C. Long

Representative Debbie Mayfield

Representative Seth McKeel

Representative Peter Nehr

Representative H. Marlene O'Toole

Representative Jimmy Patronis

Representative Scott Plakon

Representative Ralph Poppell

Representative William L. Proctor

Representative Lake Ray

Representative Betty Reed

Representative Kenneth L. Roberson

Representative Denise Grimsley

Representative D. Alan Hays

Representative Doug Holder

Representative Ed Hooper

Representative Matt Hudson

Representative Mia L. Jones

Representative Martin David Kiar

Representative John Legg

Representative Carlos Lopez-Cantera, At Large

Representative Charles McBurney

Representative Dave Murzin

Representative Bryan Nelson

Representative Mark S. Pafford

Representative Pat Patterson

Representative Juan-Carlos Planas

Representative Stephen L. Precourt

Representative Kevin J. G. Rader

Representative Ron Reagan, At Large

Representative Ronald Renuart

Representative Yolly Roberson

Representative Hazelle P. Rogers

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Representative Robert C. Schenck

Representative Elaine J. Schwartz

Representative William D. Snyder

Representative Kelli Stargel

Representative Dwayne L. Taylor

Representative Geraldine F. Thompson

Representative Perry E. Thurston, At Large

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Representative Alan B. Williams

Representative Juan C. Zapata

Representative Darryl Ervin Rouson

Representative Ron Saunders, At Large

Representative Ron Schultz

Representative Kelly Skidmore, At Large

Representative Darren Soto

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Representative Priscilla Taylor

Representative Nicholas R. Thompson

Representative John Tobia

Representative Charles E. Van Zant

Representative Michael B. Weinstein

Representative Trudi K. Williams

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The Conference Committee Amendment for CS/CS/SB 1696, relating to higher education funding, provides for the following:

- The bill modifies the Bright Futures Scholarship Program to: (1) Require a refund for courses withdrawn or dropped by students after the end of the drop and add period; (2) require that full-time students complete at least 24 semester hours, or the equivalent, per academic year for renewal of the scholarship; (3) remove college-related expense awards for Academic Scholars; (4) prohibit conversion of Gold Seal Awards to Medallion Awards; and (5) provide authorization to establish award levels in the General Appropriations Act.
- The bill establishes a new Prepaid College Plan payment methodology to state universities on behalf of beneficiaries of Prepaid College Plan contracts purchased prior to July 1, 2009. The payment methodology specifies the level the Prepaid College Board will pay for tuition increases, tuition differential increases, dormitory, and local fee increases each year, within a reasonable range based on fund reserve. An advance payment contract may also be offered that covers registration fees, tuition differential fees, and local fees under one contract, rather than under separate contracts as presently offered, as well as a new plan with incremental credit hour increases.
- The bill authorizes the Board of Governors, or the board's designee, to increase tuition and out-of-state fees for university graduate programs by up to 15 percent each year, instead of by 10 percent as currently authorized. The bill requires a 50% tuition surcharge after 120% of required credit hours for resident students. The bill modifies standards for converting to resident status for tuition purposes.
- The bill provides flexibility to state and community colleges by deleting an expenditure restriction on tuition revenue. A technical revision is made to the reporting date for the community college distance learning fee revenue. In addition, community college baccalaureate program statutory language is modified relating to state support and tuition to be "as provided in the General Appropriations Act".
- The bill limits severance payouts for employees of community colleges, the state university system, and the Board of Governors to one year's salary from state funds.
- The bill requires notice of state match delay for Community College and State University Facilities and Operating Challenge Grant donations. The bill allows Community Colleges and Universities to begin construction of facilities projects using existing donations.
- The bill revises provisions relating to several state student financial assistance programs to clarify eligibility criteria, remittance of unpaid balances and to clarify that award amounts may be prorated based on legislative appropriations. The Ethics in Business Scholarship Program for state universities and community colleges is deleted. The bill also requires annual reporting from all institutions that participate in state-funded student financial assistance programs.

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- The bill provides for consistent reporting requirements for private colleges and universities that receive state appropriations.
- The bill provides a student fee cap exemption, for 2009-10 only, to allow Florida State University to increase the student health fee for the purpose of constructing a health service center. For next year, a university is prohibited from establishing a new requirement for student health insurance coverage.
- The bill authorizes the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation to review all available service options and to make decisions based on cost effectiveness and the best interests of the client when providing vehicle modifications to eligible persons.
- The bill creates the Johnnie B. Byrd, Sr., Alzheimer's Center and Research Institute as a unit of the University of South Florida.