



# LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

A Briefing for Faculty & Staff of the University System of Georgia No. 14, May 3, 2010

“Creating a More Educated Georgia”

## General Assembly Approves Budget That Includes Recommended Funding for Formula, Physician Expansion, Major Repair and Renovation (MRR)

With the pronouncement of “sine die” (final adjournment) at midnight last Thursday, this year’s 40-day regular session of the Georgia General Assembly came to a close, but not before the House and Senate gave their final approval to the Joint Conference Committee’s version of the state’s Fiscal Year 2011 Budget.

The approved budget gives the University System of Georgia (USG) a total operating budget of \$1.94 billion in state and stimu-

lus funds – about \$10 million more than the Senate’s FY 2011 version contained – and a capital budget of \$184 million, up \$8 million from the Senate version.

The budget passed Thursday night is attentive to two of the Board of Regents’ most critical FY 2011 funding priorities – supporting the increased student enrollment the USG is experiencing and continuing the expansion of physician education to meet the state’s critical need for more doctors.

“We are very grateful to the Governor and the General Assembly for their continued support of the University System of Georgia,” said **Chancellor Erroll B. Davis Jr.**

The House and Senate agreed with **Gov. Sonny Perdue’s** recommendation to increase the USG’s formula funding by \$113 million to provide critical state support for new students who entered the University System in Fall 2008. (The formula is calculated annually using two-year-old enrollment data. In

Fall 2008, enrollment increased 5.6 percent, generating an increase of 398,000 in the number of credit hours of instruction taken by students.)

“We are extremely appreciative that our funding partners understand how critical formula funding is to our ability to operate as a University System and to adequately serve the students who come to us for their educational needs,” said **Tom Daniel**, the USG’s senior vice chancellor for external

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## Gun Legislation Passes With Elimination of 1,000-Foot Buffer Zone for College Campuses

Senate Bill 308, the controversial gun legislation, passed both houses of the legislature on Day 40 and now awaits the Governor’s signature. This bill expands the areas where a person holding a license to carry a weapon may lawfully carry that weapon.

While SB 308 retains college campuses within

the definition of a school safety zone, it eliminates the 1,000-foot buffer zone. Essentially, the “school safety zone” is now simply the campus boundary.

The bill also changes the penalty for carrying a weapon within a school safety zone. Previously, any violation was a felony. Under this bill, a violation by a licensed person is a

misdemeanor. A violation by anyone else remains a felony.

Despite retaining the concept of a school safety zone, SB 308 allows any person holding a valid license, including students age 21 or older, to have a weapon in a parked vehicle on campus. Any person (licensed or not) picking up or

dropping off a student on campus may have a weapon in a locked glove compartment (or other locked container). If this person is licensed to carry the weapon, there is no requirement to secure or otherwise lock it up. ♣

## Budget

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affairs. “These dollars are truly our bread and butter.”

The General Assembly’s FY 2011 budget also included \$900,000 to enable the regents to continue the momentum of an effort launched two years ago to expand physician education in Georgia by increasing the capacity and reach of the Medical College of Georgia’s (MCG) School of Medicine from its home campus in Augusta to Athens, Albany and Savannah.

In addition, the Joint Conference Committee agreed to:

- ◆ provide \$8.1 million to fund a rate adjustment for the Teachers’ Retirement

System, \$2.1 million for worker’s compensation and close to \$1 million for unemployment compensation;

- ◆ transfer the following mission-related special funding initiatives to the USG’s base budget: Georgia Gwinnett College, \$16.6 million; Georgia College and State University, \$1.08 million; and North Georgia College and State University, \$528,000;
- ◆ reduce the reduction of \$3.2 million made to the MCG Health, Inc., budget by the Senate to \$2.5 million; and
- ◆ reduce the reduction made to funding for MCG’s cancer research mission from \$5 million in

the Senate version of the budget to \$2.5 million, in the final budget.


## Capital Budget

The Conference Committee approved a capital budget for the USG that totals \$184 million, up \$8 million from the Senate version. The committee agreed with the Governor’s recommendation of \$60 million in Major Repair and Renovation (MRR) bond funds and made the following changes:

- ◆ restored \$1.3 million to the budget to fund an infrastructure project for North Georgia College and State University;
- ◆ restored \$2 million to the budget to fund an infrastructure project for Augusta State University; and

- ◆ added \$5.9 million to the budget to fund the renovation of College of Coastal Georgia’s Science Building.

A complete list of capital projects funded by the Conference Committee is provided in the box on this page.

The Governor has 40 days from the time of the legislature’s final adjournment to review the budget, and he may either sign it or line-item veto specific elements as he sees fit. Therefore, the document cannot not yet be considered to be in final form. 

## A Look at Capital Projects Funded

### Equipment Funds for Previously Funded Projects

<b>College of Coastal Georgia</b> Health Sciences Building .....	\$1,500,000
<b>Fort Valley State University</b> historic renovations .....	\$1,500,000
<b>Georgia Tech</b> G. Wayne Clough Undergraduate Commons .....	\$7,000,000
<b>Gainesville State College</b> academic facility .....	\$3,560,000
<b>Macon State College</b> Teacher Education Building (Macon).....	\$2,470,000
<b>University of Georgia</b> Special Collections Library .....	\$3,050,000
<b>Southern Polytechnic State University</b> Engineering Technology Center .....	\$1,000,000

### Infrastructure

<b>Columbus State University</b> computer infrastructure .....	\$2,000,000
<b>Georgia Tech</b> Eco Commons area infrastructure.....	\$300,000

See “CAPITAL PROJECTS,” Page 3 ...

## Capital Projects Funded *continued from Page 2*

### Construction Funds

<b>Armstrong Atlantic State University</b> library addition .....	\$5,000,000
<b>Abraham Baldwin Agricultural College</b> Tift/Lewis/Herring Halls renovation .....	\$4,750,000
<b>Atlanta Metropolitan College</b> Science Academic Building.....	\$10,900,000
<b>Darton College</b> Student Services renovation .....	\$1,600,000
<b>East Georgia College</b> biology labs renovation .....	\$640,000
<b>Georgia Southern University</b> Biology Building.....	\$15,000,000
<b>Georgia Southwestern State University</b> Health & Human Sciences Building .....	\$6,500,000

### Design and Construction Funds

<b>College of Coastal Georgia</b> Science Building renovation .....	\$5,900,000
<b>Dalton State College</b> Academic Building .....	\$1,300,000
<b>South Georgia College</b> Student Success Center renovation.....	\$3,750,000

### Design Funds

<b>Albany State University</b> Ray Charles Fine Arts Center .....	\$1,800,000
<b>Augusta State University</b> Wrightsboro Site Expansion.....	\$2,000,000
<b>Georgia State University</b> Humanities Building .....	\$4,700,000
<b>Valdosta State University</b> Health Sciences Building .....	\$2,800,000

### Other USG Projects

<b>University of Georgia</b> Design of Veterinary Medical Learning Center .....	\$7,700,000
<b>North Georgia College &amp; State University</b> infrastructure for IT network.....	\$1,300,000
<b>Kennesaw State University</b> infrastructure expansion .....	\$6,400,000
<b>Georgia Gwinnett College</b> D Building lab space renovation .....	\$7,000,000

### Major Repair and Renovation (MRR)

MRR bond funds.....	\$60,000,000
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**USG Capital Outlay Total.....** **\$171,420,000**

**Georgia Research Alliance .....** **\$8,500,000**

### Georgia Public Libraries

LaFayette-Walker County Public Library .....	\$2,000,000
Madison County Library.....	\$1,515,000
Greene County Library (land acquisition) .....	\$140,000

**Total Bond Projects for FY 2011 .....** **\$183,575,000**