



### **College Trustees Make Impact on the Capitol**

The AFC conducted its annual Trustees Commission Legislative Summit on February 1 in Tallahassee. Over 140 college trustees, presidents, lobbyists, and other AFC members attended.

The agenda included a trustee “orientation” lead by Dr. Chick Dassance, the former president of College of Central Florida. The orientation covered the role of the trustee in setting policy for a college and their role in fiduciary oversight. Steve Schroeder of Pasco-Hernando Community College provided an excellent overview of the Florida Sunshine laws.

Sean Alveshire, Trustee at Broward College and Chair of the AFC Trustees Commission, lead two panels as well. One panel included college presidents who discussed the issues around trustee and president relations. Dr. Bill Law (SPC), Joe Pickens (SJRSC) and David Armstrong (BC) participated in the discussion. Another panel included experienced trustees Nancy Watkins (HCC), Tami Cullen (SFCC), and Wendy Link (PBSC) who gave their perspectives on the trustee role.

Following the conference, the AFC conducted a ceremony honoring the Magnificent 12: Florida’s Historically Black College Presidents. In the 1950’s, Governor Leroy Collins supported the development of 12 junior colleges designed to skirt segregation laws and allow blacks to attend college. The original 12 presidents of these colleges are memorialized now permanently with a Wall of Honor in the AFC Building. All of the 12 colleges eventually merged with our present day colleges by the mid-1960’s.

The day was capped off with a reception at the Governor’s Mansion hosted by Governor Rick Scott. The reception was co-sponsored by the AFC Foundation and the Florida College System Foundation. The next morning the Trustees Commission conducted a business meeting and fanned out across the Capitol to meet with their respective local legislators.

### **House Budget Bills Move**

The House is moving forward on its budget proposal as reported last week. [HB5001](#) covers the appropriations and [HB 5003](#) covers the implementation of the budget. Both have been referred for floor vote. The Senate has not yet released its budget proposal.

**[HB 525](#) by Workman and Abruzzo; [SB1334](#) by Oelrich and [SB 1280](#) by Latvala (similar)**

As reported previously Rep. Ritch Workman (R, Melbourne), has filed a retirement system reform bill that address changes that would only impact new hires effective July 1, 2012. So far no significant changes have been made to the bill but it has moved through the House committee process and has re-emerged as a committee bill (HB7079). The bill revises definitions of terms "normal retirement date" and changes the vestment period to ten years. The bill barely passed a 7-6 vote in the House Government Operations Subcommittee on January 31. The bill has not moved in the Senate.

**[SB 492](#) by Brannon and [HB 4041](#) by Burgin Regarding Sponsorships and Baccalaureate degrees (identical)**

As previously reported, among other things this was a rather innocuous bill that was amended by Sen. Siplin (D, Orlando). He filed an amendment that would repeal the provision that gives our institutions exemptions from getting SBE approval for baccalaureate degrees, after at least three years have passed. The bill has moved along in the House and is on the floor for second reading. It has not moved in the Senate.

**[HB 673](#) by Brodner and Tobia; [HB 0153](#) by Hooper, [SB 0538](#) by Bogdanoff, and [SB 1460](#) by Simmons (similar)**

HB 673 is a state preference bill identical to similar ones opposed last year as an unfunded mandate. The bill, if passed would expand Florida statutes to include construction services where colleges would be required to pay an in state construction company a higher price for construction services equal to the out-of-state low bidders state in-state preference. If the low bidder was a Georgia general contractor and Georgia has a 5% preference statute then we would be required to complete legal research of the low bidders state laws to determine what their state preferences are as well as pay the Florida next low bidder up to 5% (in this example) more than an in state construction contractor. We believe this is again an unfunded mandate.

**[HB 487](#) by Fresen and [SB 710](#) by Bogdanoff regarding Destination Casinos**

(From Lobbytools "Current")

Legislation to bring three destination casino resorts to South Florida, with a minimum \$2 billion investment apiece is nearly dead for the regular legislative session, failing to get through its first committee vote in the House Friday. The much-hyped and heavily lobbied legislation, HB 487, underwent significant changes this week in an effort to garner support on the House Business and Consumer Affairs Subcommittee, but the bill's sponsor, Rep. Erik Fresen, R-Miami, postponed a vote on the bill after sensing he didn't have the votes on the 15-member panel. The bill is still alive in the Senate but Rep. Gary Aubuchon, R-Cape Coral, chairman of the House Rules and Calendar Committee released a statement Friday titled "Gambling Bill is Dead," saying he will not bring up the bill for a vote on the House floor this session. "As long as I am the chairman of the House Rules Committee, this bill will not be withdrawn from any committees and is dead for this year," Aubuchon said.

The bill has passed one committee of reference in the Senate but has not moved there in four weeks. Fresen tried to frame the bill as a restructuring of gambling in Florida, touting provisions to create a Division of Gaming Control to oversee all aspects of non-Lottery gambling in the state, a ban on Internet sweepstakes cafes contained in the bill, and provisions restricting the destination casinos to Miami-Dade and Broward counties.

## **FROM THE NEWS SERVICE OF FLORIDA WIRE...**

### **DISTRICTS COMING INTO FOCUS**

When the 2012 legislative session started, it would have been safe to predict that redistricting would be the most-difficult --- and politically divisive --- issue to resolve. But with House votes Friday, the Republican-dominated Legislature is close to finalizing its redistricting plans. The maps likely will face court challenges from Democrats and other critics, but Speaker Dean Cannon, R-Winter Park, praised what he described as a "careful, thoughtful and deliberative process." Senate President Mike Haridopolos, meanwhile, had to put off a vote this week on privatizing prisons across the southern half of the state after running into bipartisan opposition.

House members voted along party lines Friday to pass legislative and congressional maps and send them back to the Senate for final approval next week. Republican leaders said the maps follow constitutional requirements, including complying with a 2010 ballot initiative aimed at eliminating gerrymandering. They said, for example, the maps will lump some incumbent Republicans into the same districts and also split fewer cities and counties than in the past. "At the end of the day, this decision is bigger than us, this map is bigger than us, the Constitution is bigger than any one of us," said House Redistricting Chairman Will Weatherford, R-Wesley Chapel. But Democrats blasted the maps, saying they were designed to help elect Republicans and violate the 2010 ballot initiative, which was known as the Fair Districts amendment. The Democratic arguments also set the stage for a legal fight in the coming months. "This vote by the GOP is nothing less than a slap-in-the face to the 63 percent of Florida voters who approved Fair Districts -- the maps passed today by the Florida House are unconstitutional, pure and simple," state Democratic Party Executive Director Scott Arceneaux said in a statement Friday. "They represent just the type of partisan gerrymandering and incumbent protection voters rejected in 2010."

### **PRISON PRIVATIZATION SHACKLED**

Haridopolos and Budget Chairman JD Alexander have pushed since last year's session to privatize prisons across the southern part of the state, arguing it would save money that could be used for other needs such as education. But when Haridopolos brought the issue to the Senate floor this week, he ran into opposition from a coalition of Democrats and Republicans. That forced Haridopolos to twice postpone moving forward with the privatization bill, as he tried to gather enough votes to pass it.

The standoff intensified Wednesday, when Haridopolos stripped Sen. Mike Fasano, R-New Port Richey, of his role as chairman of the Senate Criminal Justice Appropriations Subcommittee. Fasano has been perhaps the most-outspoken critic of the privatization plan. Haridopolos, R-Merritt Island, said he didn't think Fasano was committed to making needed budget cuts, which includes the prison-privatization plan. "I'm asking other budget chairmen to make difficult cuts," Haridopolos said. "It became clear to me that Sen. Fasano was not willing to make those difficult cuts." But Fasano harshly criticized the decision and said he was standing up for the "little guy and gal."

"No matter how big the bully in the schoolyard may be, if the loss of a chairmanship is the result of taking a stand for what is right, I wear that loss as a badge of honor," Fasano said. Haridopolos acknowledged this week what was obvious when the vote was postponed the votes may not be there to pass it. "It's super-close," he said. "There's a good chance we could bring it up and not win."