

Meeting Minutes  
Governmental Services Committee  
Taxation and Budget Reform Commission  
Senate Office Building, Room 301  
Tallahassee, Florida  
August 1, 2007  
9:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.

**Committee Members:** *Roberto Martinez, Barney Barnett, Martha Barnett, Mark Bostick, Talbot “Sandy” D’Alemberte, Bruce Kyle, Robert McKee, Lesley Miller, Randy Miller, Jade Moore, James Scott*

**Members Present:**

Roberto Martinez, Chair  
Barney Barnett  
Martha Barnett (by phone)  
Mark Bostick  
Talbot “Sandy” D’Alemberte  
Bruce Kyle  
Robert McKee  
Lesley Miller  
Randy Miller (by phone)  
Jade Moore  
James Scott

Chair Martinez called the Governmental Services Committee meeting to order at 9:00 a.m.

Staff called the roll and the presence of a quorum was announced.

The minutes for the preceding July 20 committee meeting, having been previously disseminated to the committee members via email, were voted upon with no edits and unanimously approved.

The committee heard presentations from a panel of Florida Community College Council of Presidents representatives including Dr. Jackson Sasser, Chair, Council of Presidents and President, Santa Fe Community College; Dr. Sanford Shugart, President, Valencia Community College; David Armstrong, former Chancellor, Florida Community College System and President, Broward Community College; Dr. Gwendolyn Stephenson, President, Hillsborough Community College; Dr. Edwin Massey, President, Indian River Community College; and Dr. Charles Mojock, President, Lake-Sumter Community College on issues related to community college higher education funding.

The panel members shared details on the demographics of the Florida Community College System enrollments, performance, and economic impact, as well as its strategic plan, alignment with K-12 and the State University System, and baccalaureate degree programs. The panel members made policy recommendations to the Committee that included a local option ad valorem or sales tax in order to allow for a dedicated funding source for community colleges subject to voter approval at the local level and a tuition buy-down plan to cover their strategic plan model that involves fully funding the community college formula. Other community college-related policy considerations were discussed, such as:

- 1) An increase in capacity funding to the community colleges to pick up those additional students that will not be able to afford the SUS schools, but who want to start the process of getting a four year degree at a community college; and
- 2) An increase in funding for community colleges to fund four-year degree programs, since many of the students seeking a four-year degree will stay at the community college once they realize how good and affordable they are.

At 11:40 a.m., the Committee members broke for lunch on their own.

At 12:20 p.m., the Committee members resumed the meeting.

The committee heard presentations from a panel of State University System representatives including Dr. Mark Rosenberg, Chancellor, State University System; Dr. Joe Shepard, Vice President for Administrative Services, Florida Gulf Coast University; and Dr. Judy Genshaft, President, University of South Florida on issues related to university higher education funding.

The panel members shared details on the demographics of the State University System enrollments, performance, and economic impact, as well as the unique mission and goals of the two universities represented. The panel members made policy recommendations to the Committee that included a tax on services that require postsecondary credentials and a portion of the tobacco tax for higher education funding. Other university-related policy considerations were discussed, such as:

- 1) Raising tuition at the State University System schools; and
- 2) Increasing funding for loans and financial aid to needy students who want to attend an State University System school from the beginning of their college career. (Note: We must take measures to ensure that the State University System schools do not become bastions for the upper classes, which could happen as the university tuitions become more expensive, driving away members of lower economic groups: i.e., minorities.)

Policy discussions were also held on topics that impact both community colleges and universities, such as:

- 1) Modifying Bright Futures to make it a "needs-based" program, but keeping a component for truly exceptional students who promise to remain in and/or return to the state to do a portion of their early work years;
- 2) Modifying the Pre-Paid College Program since it keeps the price of the State University System tuitions artificially low and is also suspect policy;
- 3) Modifying the state lottery funds to increase their contribution to financial aid programs (not Bright Futures);
- 4) Modifying the use of PECO funds to increase their share to the Community College and State University System schools;
- 5) Modifying the Class Size implementation to make the requirements applicable at the school-wide level, with safeguards to prevent abuse of the goals, making the implementation more practical and minimizing the huge fiscal impact on the budget that drains funds away from everything else; and
- 6) Eliminating FRAG (Florida Resident Access Grant).

Chair Martinez announced a tentative meeting schedule for the Governmental Services Committee for August and September would include meetings in Orlando, Tallahassee or Tampa on the following dates:

August 17 – Tallahassee: Discussion of Health Care issues

August 21 – Greater Orlando Aviation Authority Board Room, Orlando  
International Airport: Public Safety issues

September 10 – Hillsborough County Aviation Authority Board Room, Tampa  
International Airport: Transportation issues

September 20 – Location TBA (in conjunction with Jacksonville public hearing):  
Infrastructure, Water, DCF, and other issues

In addition to the topics already planned for the meetings above, Chair Martinez requested that presenters be brought in to lead discussions in such areas of interest as the Florida Lottery, Bright Futures/Pre-Paid College Program, PECO funds, FRAG, Class Size impact on budget and alternatives at the school-wide level, Workforce Education, and Special Taxing Districts.

Meeting times and other schedule details will be posted on the commission website and members will be notified by e-mail.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 2:50 p.m.