

State House Advocate

This Week at the Legislature



May 19, 2020

The 2020 Regular Session began on Tuesday, February 4 with several critical issues before the Legislature for debate that would have impacted municipal governments. Those issues included small cell deployment, police and planning jurisdiction preemption, fireworks preemption, PTSD coverage for first responders, motor fuel excise tax preemption and public records. While most issues were halted due to the COVID-19 outbreak, legislation to ban municipalities from implementing new occupational taxes without legislative approval managed to sail through both bodies early in the session.

Following several weeks of uncertainty, the Legislature announced they would reconvene in Montgomery on May 4th to consider the Education Trust Fund and General Fund budgets, local legislation and supplemental appropriations. Once reconvened on the 4th, the Legislature passed the Education Trust Fund and General Fund budgets, a \$1.25 billion bond issue to fund capital projects at public K-12 schools, two-year colleges and universities and several pieces of local legislation.

The budgets and school bond issue were then sent to Governor Ivey for her signature. Originally, the General Fund Budget (Senate Bill 161) that was sent to Governor Ivey included an appropriation that would have allocated \$200 million of the \$1.8 billion from the CARES Act to her and state agencies to be spent at their discretion, while leaving the Legislature the rest. After reviewing, Governor Ivey returned SB161 with an executive amendment that detailed her administrations recommendations on how the funds should be spent. Her plan included:

- Up to \$300 million to reimburse state agencies for expenses directly related to the pandemic.
- **Up to \$250 million to reimburse local governments for expenses directly related to the pandemic.**
- Up to \$250 million to support delivery of health care and related services to citizens because of the pandemic.
- Up to \$300 million to support citizens, businesses, and nonprofit and faith-based organizations directly impacted by the pandemic.
- Up to \$53 million for reimbursement of equipment and infrastructure necessary for remote work and public access to functions of state government directly impacted by the pandemic, including the Legislature.

- Up to \$300 million for expenses related to technology and infrastructure for remote instruction and distance learning.
- Up to \$200 million for reimbursement of costs necessary to address the pandemic by the Department of Corrections.
- Up to \$10 million for reimbursement of costs necessary to ensure access to courts during the pandemic.
- \$5 million to reimburse the General Fund for supplemental appropriations to the Alabama Department of Public health during the pandemic.
- Up to \$118 million for any other lawful purpose approved by the federal government.

On Monday, May 18th the Legislature met for the final day of the 2020 Regular Session. The Senate and House concurred with Governor Ivey's executive amendment to the General Fund Budget, adjourned sine die and Governor Ivey signed both budgets along with the million dollar Public School and College Authority (PSCA) bond.

On a final note - several pieces of legislation that would have been detrimental to municipalities failed to pass during the 2020 regular session. We must remain vigilant to the fact that these issues (small cell, police and planning jurisdictions, PTSD coverage, etc.) will reappear when the Governor calls the Legislature back to Montgomery for a special session. While we are unsure of when that date is, the League and its members must advocate for Governor Ivey to refrain from having any of these bills in the call. Additionally, we must continue to advocate our Congressional delegation for direct funding to municipalities to address the loss of revenue during the COVID-19 pandemic. Municipalities are the foundation of our state. We must do everything within our power to ensure that we continue to provide resources that will encourage safe vibrant spaces for business to thrive and citizens to live, work and play.

For a full list of bills we tracked this session, click [here](#).

This weekly e-newsletter will provide you with an advanced look at what we expect to take place at the Alabama Legislature during the 2020 Regular Session. You will receive a *State House Advocate* each Friday during the Session, through which we will highlight **Action Alerts (which need your immediate attention)**, links to committee agendas and the other activities from the Legislature which influence municipal governments.

Engagement Opportunities with the League

The League's annual convention will be held on July 23rd at the Renaissance Montgomery Hotel & Spa at the Convention Center in Montgomery.

It will be a full day event to include our annual Resolutions Committee; AMIC's Annual Member Business Meeting, and the League's Annual Business Session. CMO credit will be available and service awards will be presented and we will conclude the day with a

President's Reception at the Alabama Department of Archives and History.

While there is not a registration fee to attend, registration is required. To do so, please click [here](#).

GRASSROOTS ADVOCACY LINKS

- [League Legislative Page](#)
- [Grassroots Advocacy](#)
- [Bills of Interest](#)
- [ALISON](#)
- [Governor's Office](#)
- [Contacts for the House](#)
- [Contacts for the Senate](#)



Should you have any questions of legislation or need additional information please contact:

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