

# FINE GEDDIE

GOVERNMENT RELATIONS

## THE FINE GEDDIE REPORT

2020 REGULAR SESSION

MAY 19, 2020

In brief sessions Monday afternoon, both the Alabama Senate and House overwhelmingly approved Gov. Kay Ivey's plan for spending federal Coronavirus relief funds, the only major issue in question going into the Regular Session's final day. At more than \$1.9 billion, Alabama's share of the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act funds is nearly as large as the annual budget for most non-education state agencies. For weeks, the executive and legislative branches had jockeyed for control of these dollars, which must be spent this calendar year or they revert to the federal government.

Shortly after lawmakers adjourned, the Governor announced on Twitter that she had signed the state's fiscal year 2021 operating budgets – the \$7.1 billion Education Trust Fund and the \$2.4 billion General Fund – and a \$1.25 billion bond issue for education.

On Thursday of last week, the Governor had announced her support of the budgets as passed by the Alabama Legislature, and she also announced an executive amendment to a separate supplemental appropriations bill for the current year budget to allocate CARES Act dollars as follows:

- **\$568 million to state government:** \$300 million to state agencies in general, \$200 million for prison system specifically, \$53 million for equipment and infrastructure needed for remote work and public access to the functions of state government, \$10 million to the courts and \$5 million to offset an earlier supplemental appropriation to the Department of Public Health;
- **\$300 million to the private sector** to support citizens, businesses, nonprofits and faith-based organizations directly impacted by the pandemic;
- **\$300 million to education** for technology and infrastructure related to remote instruction and learning;
- **\$250 million to local governments;**
- **\$250 million for healthcare services;**
- **\$118 million** for any lawful purpose.

The executive amendment also requires reporting of expenditures to the legislative leadership, creates a mechanism for legislative leaders to approve any adjustments that may be needed and, in case authorization is granted at some future date, sets up a process for using CARES Act funds to offset lost revenue to the state.

The Alabama Legislature adjourned "sine die" Monday afternoon, the official end of a Regular session marked by COVID-19 interruptions, safety measures and issues. **Only 13 general bills passed the Legislature in the Regular Session, (not including local, appropriations, or sunset bills).**

The next scheduled meeting of the Alabama Legislature is in February 2021, but one or more special sessions are possible in 2020 to deal with unaddressed concerns. ♦