

UNDER the DOME



NOVEMBER 9, 2015

Welcome

Under the Dome is an update on actions and activities of the West Virginia Legislature, provided during the regular legislative session and interim sessions for West Virginia University faculty and staff by WVU's Office of State, Local and Corporate Relations. This issue provides an overview of the 82nd Legislature's interim sessions, gubernatorial appointments, the budget and important dates for the 2016 session.

Interims

Since adjourning on March 14, 2015, the Legislature has met for four interim sessions on April 13-14, June 7-8, September 13-14 and October 18-19.

During October interims, Rob Alsop, vice president for legal and governmental affairs, and Carolyn Long, WVU Tech president, along with State, Corporate and Local Relations staff members, met with several legislators to discuss the vision for the Beckley Campus and WVU Tech.

The next interim session will be held in Charleston from November 15-16.

New Members

On September 15, Governor Tomblin appointed Delegate Bob Ashley to the State Senate representing the 3rd District (Pleasants, Wood, Wirt and part of Roane counties). The vacancy was created with the resignation of former Senator David Nohe, who was appointed to the Parole Board. Senator Ashley served in the House of Delegates from 1985-1998 and 2000-2015. He will serve as vice chair of the Senate Banking and Insurance Committee, as well as a member of the committees on Confirmations, Health and Human Resources, Judiciary, Military, and Natural Resources.

On October 4, Governor Tomblin appointed Martin "Rick" Atkinson III to the House of Delegates representing the 11th District (part of Roane and part of Jackson counties). Delegate Atkinson fills the seat vacated by Senator Bob Ashley. He is a West Virginia University graduate and will serve on the committees on Agriculture and Natural Resources, Government Organization, Health and Human Resources, and Veterans Affairs and Homeland Security.

The Budget

In October, Governor Tomblin announced an across-the-board cut of four percent for most West Virginia government agencies. According to the Governor's Office, the reduction was made necessary due to unexpected and unprecedented drops in the State's severance tax collections. State aid to public schools, which has not been subject to cuts in recent years, was reduced by one percent.

Staff Council

During October interims, leadership of the Staff Council traveled to Charleston to meet with legislators, including Senate Majority Leader Mitch Carmichael, Senate Finance Chair Mike Hall, Senate Education Chair Dave Sypolt, House Majority Leader Daryl Cowles, House Minority Leader Tim Miley, House Finance Chair Eric Nelson and House Education Chair Amanda Pasdon, as well as Monongalia County Senators Bob Beach, Kent Leonhardt and Bob Williams.

Important Dates

First Day of Regular Legislative Session	Wednesday, January 13, 2016
Monongalia County Day at the Capitol	Wednesday, January 13, 2016
Higher Education Day at the Capitol	Tuesday, January 19, 2016
WVU and WVU Extension Day at the Capitol	Friday, February 19, 2016
Undergraduate Research Day at the Capitol	Thursday, February 25, 2016
Last Day of Regular Legislative Session	Saturday, March 12, 2016

More Information

To learn more about the interim sessions, please visit the Legislature's interim committee website at <http://www.legis.state.wv.us/Committees/Interims/interims.cfm#dates>.

To view Governor Tomblin's Executive Order on the State Budget in its entirety, please visit <http://www.governor.wv.gov/Documents/Executive%20Order.pdf>.