In Review

Under the Dome delivers a review of the issues considered by the 83rd Legislature during its Second Session and provides information on matters that affect WVU and higher education. This edition covers the final days of the session and details action on bills passed by the Legislature and signed or vetoed by the Governor.

The Budget

Following two years of extended sessions to deal with the State budget, the Legislature passed the budget unanimously on the last day of the regular session. This is the first time in 36 years that a budget has passed during the 60-day session.

The budget includes no cuts to higher education. WVU received additional support in the budget for partial assistance with pay raises and to support a program in Health Sciences.

PEIA Task Force

On Thursday, Governor Justice announced the appointments to the PEIA Task Force. The group will research and make recommendations for finding permanent solutions and fixes to the healthcare plan for State employees. The group will hold public hearings in all 55 counties.

The Governor’s Chief of Staff – Mike Hall – will lead the Task Force and chaired its first meeting on March 13 at the State Capitol.

Members of the Task Force include:

- Marty Becker, Chairman of the Board of Directors, QBE Insurance Group
- Greg Burton, CEO BrickStreet Insurance
- Andy Paterno, CEO Centurion Insurance Services
- Joe Letnaunchyn, President and CEO, West Virginia Hospital Association
- Rob Alsop, Vice President for Strategic Initiatives, West Virginia University
- Nelson Spencer, McDowell County Schools Superintendent
- Perry Bryant, Executive Director, West Virginians for Affordable Healthcare
- Senator Mitch Carmichael (R-Jackson)
- Senator Robert Plymale (D-Cabell)
- Senator Craig Blair (R-Berkeley)
- Delegate Eric Nelson (R-Kanawha)

For questions or more information, contact Travis Mollohan, director, State and Local Relations, email: tmolloh1@mail.wvu.edu; phone: 304-400-4963
Delegate Roger Hanshaw (R-Clay)
Delegate Mick Bates (D-Raleigh)
Geoff Christian, Current Member, PEIA Board
Christine Campbell, President, American Federation of Teachers West Virginia
Dale Lee, President, West Virginia Education Association
James “Joe” White, Executive Director, West Virginia School Service Personnel Association
Dr. Rahul Gupta, Commissioner of Department of Health and Human Resources Bureau for Public Health and State Health Officer
Douglas Kirk, Division of Highways
Lieutenant Michael LaFauci, West Virginia State Police
The Honorable Jeffrey Reed, Retired Wood County Circuit Court Judge
Judy Hale, Retired Public Educator
Beth “Buffy” Hammers, CEO, Marshall Health
Helen Matheny, Director of Collaborative Relations and Initiatives, WVU Health Sciences Center
Lisa M. Simon, Certified Public Accountant, Wheeling
Sarita Beckett, Public Schoolteacher, Raleigh County
Dr. Sherri Young, Medicare Medical Director, Aetna Insurance
Amy Loring, Human Resources Coordinator and Director of Staffing and Employee Relations, Berkeley County Schools

Legislation Passed
More than 1,700 bills were introduced this legislative session, but only 260 bills passed both the House and Senate. Some of the bills that relate to WVU and higher education or have significant impact on the state are:

SJR 3 – This joint resolution allows for the Legislature to have further oversight of the Judiciary’s budget and because it requires a Constitutional change, the issue will appear on the 2018 ballot for approval by voters.
SB 152 – The Budget Bill
SB 263 – Eliminating Film Tax Credits
SB 272 – Creates the Community Overdose Response Demonstration Pilot Project Within the Office of Drug Control Policy and Increases Access for Local and State Emergency Response Personnel to Opioid Antagonists
SB 365 – Continues the Young Entrepreneur Reinvestment Act
SB 375 – Relating to Farmers Markets Allows Home-Based Vendors to Sell at Farmers Markets, and Transfers Regulation from Local Health Departments and DHHR to the Department of Agriculture
SB 415 – Permitting Wagering on the Results of Certain Professional or Collegiate Sports or Athletic Events, Commonly Known as Sports Betting

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SB 475 – Creates the West Virginia Seed Law to Develop an Industrial Hemp Seed Certification Program

SB 479 – Establishing Local Government Monitoring by the State Auditor, Which is a Partnership Between the State Auditor’s Office and Fourth-Year and Master’s Accounting Students at WVU

SB 510 – Designating Hospitals for Stroke Treatment

SB 625 – Creating the WV Volunteer Fire and Rescue Act of 2018

HB 2028 – Allows for a Suit Against the State to Be Filed in a Circuit Where the Plaintiff or Petitioner Resides or Where the Claim Arose; Previously All Claims Against the State Had to Be Filed in Kanawha County

HB 2655 – Establishing the Crime of Cyberbullying

HB 4001 – Requiring Work Eligibility and Defining Fraud Requirements for Public Assistance Programs

HB 4002 – Providing That All Delegates Shall Be Elected From 100 Single Member Districts Following the 2020 U.S. Census

HB 4006 – Eliminating the Office of Cabinet Secretary of Education and the Arts

HB 4015 – Creating and Maintaining Centralized State Vehicle Inventory System

HB 4145 – Increasing Salaries of State Police, Public Schoolteachers and School Service Personnel

HB 4156 – Establishing Qualifications for Full- and Part-Time Nursing School Faculty Members

HB 4187 – Business Liability Protection Act, Which Allows Guns in Vehicles Parked on Public and Private Employer Parking Lots

HB 4251 – Permitting Employees of Baccalaureate Institutions and Universities Outside of West Virginia to be Appointed to Board of Governors

HB 4268 – Co-tenancy Modernization and Majority Protection Act, Which Allows for Development of Mineral Rights Under a Piece of Property if 75% of the Property’s Ownership Consents

HB 4424 – Providing That the Ethics Act Applies to Certain Persons Providing Services Without Pay to State Elected Officials

HB 4488 – Adding Five Counties (Braxton, Webster, Nicholas, Clay and Webster) to the Hatfield-McCoy Recreational Trail Authority

HB 4558 – Establishing the Entrepreneurship and Innovation Investment Fund in the West Virginia Development Office

HB 4629 – Permits Political Subdivisions (Counties and Municipalities) to be Members of Cooperative Associations That Enhance or Expand Broadband Services

To review bills that passed this year, please visit: www.wvlegislature.gov/Bill_Status/Bills_all_pass.cfm?year=2018&sessiontype=RS&btype=bill.

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**Actions by the Governor**
Thus far, Governor Justice has signed more than 30 bills that were passed by the Legislature.
To review bills that were signed or vetoed by the Governor, please visit: governor.wv.gov/legislation/Pages/default.aspx.

**New Members**
On February 9, Governor Justice appointed Chanda Adkins to the House of Delegates, representing the 31st District, which constitutes part of Raleigh County and part of Wyoming County. Adkins replaced Karen Lynne Arvon, who was appointed to the State Senate. Adkins is a licensed pharmacist and graduate of the WVU School of Pharmacy.

**WVU at the State Capitol**
Travis Mollohan and Rocco Fucillo, both from WVU’s State and Local Relations team, represent WVU at the State Capitol during the legislative session. They can answer questions about any issues addressed by the Legislature. Contact info: Travis Mollohan (tmolloh1@mail.wvu.edu) or Rocco Fucillo (rsfucillo@mail.wvu.edu).

**More Information**
To learn more about the Legislature, including district maps, bill tracking, committee assignments and a summary of legislative activities, please visit wvlegislature.gov. You may also find contact information for your legislators on that website.
To learn more about WVU’s legislative initiatives, please visit governmentrelations.wvu.edu.

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