

Gov. Kay Ivey proposing raises for teachers, state employees

Updated Jan 9, 2:25 PM;
Posted Jan 9, 9:22 AM

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By **Mike Cason**, mcason@al.com

Gov. Kay Ivey is proposing raises for education employees and state employees in her budgets for next year.

And legislators can spend \$200 million more from the Education Trust Fund next year than they did this year.

Those are two pieces of information lawmakers heard during reports on the state's financial outlook this morning before they started their annual session at noon.

Kirk Fulford, deputy director of the Fiscal Division of the Legislative Services Agency, made a presentation on issues facing lawmakers and revenue projections for 2019.

Fulford's presentation.

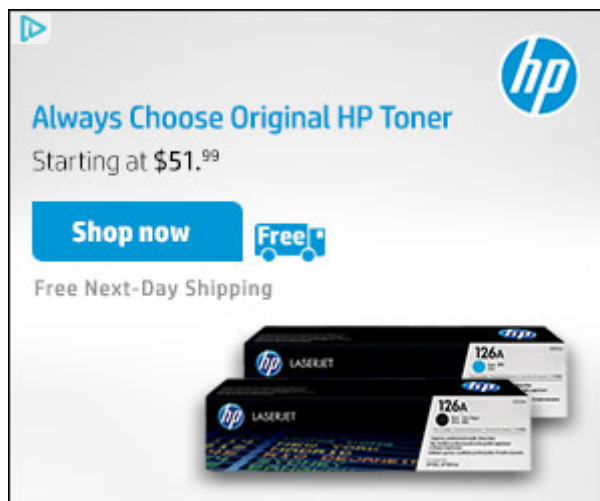
Finance Director Clinton Carter, representing the governor's office, also made a presentation.

Ivey gives her first State of the State address at 6:30 tonight.

Fulford had some good news today. Lawmakers planned to carry forward \$93 million from the 2018 General Fund budget for contingencies in 2019. Fulford said the carryover amount will actually be \$129 million.


On the education side, Fulford said the cap on spending from the Education Trust Fund in 2019 will be \$6.6 billion, \$216 million more than legislators appropriated from the ETF for 2018.

The cap is set under a law called the Rolling Reserve Act, which limits spending based on a 15-year history of revenues.




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Carter said the governor's budget proposal includes money for cost-of-living raises for state employees and for education employees. He did not give a percentage, saying he did not want to steal the governor's thunder in her speech tonight. But the numbers he presented indicated a proposed raise in the range of 2 to 3 percent.

Carter said the governor would propose a budget for 2019 that spends \$2 billion from the General Fund, the largest General Fund budget ever and about 1 percent more than this year.

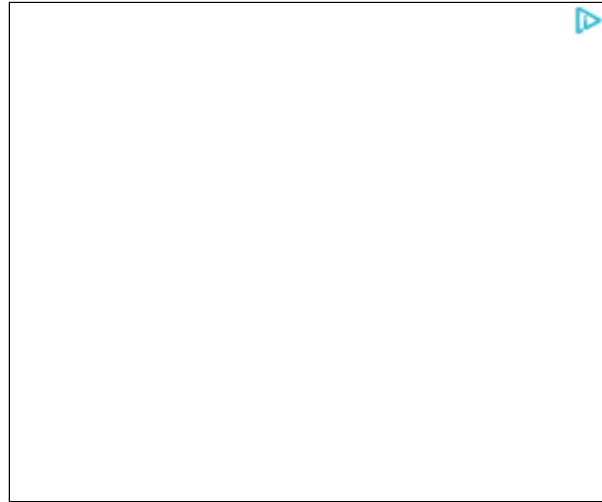
That includes increases requested by the Department of Corrections -- a \$30 million supplement to this year's budget and a \$50 million increase for next year (a total of \$80 million over the two years).

Legislators began budget hearings last week, with presentations from Medicaid, the Alabama Law Enforcement Agency, Mental Health, Public Health and Corrections.

Ivey is proposing a \$54 million increase from the General Fund for Medicaid, which is what the agency requested. The governor proposes a \$9 million increase for the Department of Mental Health, which Carter said is about 80 percent of the the increase requested by the agency.

Ivey's General Fund budget includes \$14.4 million for cost-of-living raises for state employees. Carter said a 1 percentage point increase would cost about \$5 million.

State employees have not had a cost of living raise since 2009.



Ivey's Education Trust Fund budget proposal includes \$92.8 million for cost-of-living raises. Carter said each percentage point raise for education employees costs the ETF about \$40 million.

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