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Issues to Watch in the 2018 Legislative Session

Alabama lawmakers return to Montgomery on Tuesday to begin the 2018 legislative session.

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FILE - In this March 3, 2015 file photo, Alabama representatives prepare for the opening session in the house of representatives chambers at the State House in Montgomery, Ala. Alabama lawmakers return to Montgomery on Tuesday, Jan. 9, 2018, to begin the 2018 legislative session that comes at the start of an election year. The session is expected to be dominated by two major budgetary issues: Prisons and Children's Health Insurance Program. (AP Photo/Brynn Anderson, File) The Associated Press

AP

By KIM CHANDLER, Associated Press

MONTGOMERY, Ala. (AP) — [Alabama \(/news/best-states/alabama\)](/news/best-states/alabama) lawmakers return to Montgomery on Tuesday to begin the 2018 legislative session. Here are seven issues to watch throughout the session.

PRISON SPENDING

Alabama is facing a court order to improve conditions in its prisons after a federal judge last year ruled that mental health care was "horrendously inadequate." State lawmakers this session will deal with the price tag of trying to comply with the ruling against the state.

The prison system is seeking an additional \$80 million over the next two years to boost staffing and pay for

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