

# MAYNARD

## COOPER GALE

### 2022 Legislative Update: Special Session Concludes - Regular Session Resumes

#### Overview

Alabama legislators answered the call from Governor Ivey to pass legislation appropriating \$772M in Federal American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds during the Special Session called on January 18<sup>th</sup>. Legislators began their work immediately and wasted no time coming up with a bipartisan plan to address broadband connectivity and access, water and sewer infrastructure, healthcare and other pandemic related items. The plan allocates:

- \$277M for broadband expansion.
- \$225M for water and sewer infrastructure.
- \$80M for hospitals and nursing homes.
- \$79.5M for the unemployment compensation trust fund.
- \$37M for various healthcare services (mental health, rehabilitative services, assisted living and other providers).
- \$30M for rural hospitals.
- \$20M for emergency responders and volunteer fire departments.
- \$11M for reimbursement to counties for housing state inmates as the result of the pandemic.
- \$7.8M for reporting and auditing of the funds.
- \$5M for improving telemedicine.

The House passed the plan 100-0 and the Senate passed it 26-0. Governor Ivey applauded the work of the lawmakers and issued the following statement: "I am pleased Alabama will use these one-time federal dollars wisely thanks to the strong work by our Legislature. I commend our legislators for their efficient work in directing these funds to meet some of Alabama's toughest challenges. We are making smart investments to increase statewide broadband connectivity, improve our water and sewer infrastructure, as well as health care infrastructure. We are also addressing measures to reduce employment taxes paid by Alabama businesses as they continue to rebound from the pandemic. This was an overwhelmingly bipartisan effort by the men and women of the Alabama Legislature, and I am proud of their good work in dealing with the task the federal government dealt us."

The Governor is expected to sign the plan into law immediately.

#### ARPA – Second Round

Now that the on hand ARPA funds have been allocated lawmakers can begin to think about how to spend the second round of funds which are expected to arrive in early summer. Alabama is due to receive another \$1.06 billion no later than June. The second round of funding is the balance of the \$2.1 billion Congress approved for the state. Similar to the first round it is expected that legislators will use the one-time federal funds to address many longstanding needs.

#### Regular Session Resumes

With the special session concluded, lawmakers will return to Montgomery on Tuesday, February 1<sup>st</sup> to resume the regular session. Legislators will pick up where they left off and are expected to work through late April.

Additionally, legislators may have to deal with congressional redistricting. A Federal three-judge panel issued a ruling on Monday directing lawmakers to produce a plan to provide for two districts in which black

voters comprise a voting-age majority by February 11<sup>th</sup>. The current plan, which provides for only one of the seven congressional districts to be majority black, was developed by legislators last year. The Alabama Attorney General's office has filed an appeal contesting the ruling and has requested that it be stayed during the appellate process.

### **Statistics**

Through three legislative days, legislators have introduced 294 bills - 174 in the House and 120 in the Senate.

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