



**LEGISLATIVE  
UPDATE**  
WEEK 1:  
January 12 -- 16



***Fellow Child Advocates!***

Week 1 of the 2026 legislative session is in the books, and lawmakers will return tomorrow for the 4th legislative day! Take a look at the recap of the first week's events below and [view VOICES' 2026 Policy Agenda online.](#)

*But first...*

Are you joining us for this year's Child Advocacy Day in just *two weeks*? Seating is limited. Register below to reserve your spot.

Register Today

We are excited to co-host again with the Alabama Chapter of the Academy of Pediatrics! Join us to hear from agency leaders who serve children and families and learn about key legislative priorities shaping Alabama's policy landscape in 2026.

**WHEN:** February 4, 2026 – 8:00 – 10:30 a.m.

**WHERE:** Alabama Association of School Boards  
424 South Perry Street, Montgomery, AL 36104.

*\*\*Parking is available at Cramton Bowl with a short walk or shuttle to AASB.*

[What Happened During Week 1?](#)

**Governor Ivey Delivered Her Ninth and Final State of the State Address**

The 2026 legislative session kicked off with Governor Kay Ivey delivering her ninth and final State of the State address, marking her last year in office. She praised Alabama's thriving economy, highlighting billions in new private investment, job growth, and the Rebuild Alabama program's infrastructure improvements.

Ivey outlined key priorities: public safety, disaster preparedness, and education investment, urging bipartisan collaboration to address challenges facing families. This address was especially notable as Ivey became Alabama's longest-serving female governor and a prominent figure among women governors nationwide.

The priorities she set will guide lawmakers this session and impact families and communities across Alabama. Investments in education, infrastructure, and public safety are essential for helping families access opportunities. Ivey's final year is poised to shape legislative actions that will enhance child well-being and economic stability in the state.

VOICES applauds the governor's focus on improving rural health care and her commitment to education, which has led to better student outcomes.

### **Joint Legislative Budget Overview**

On Wednesday, legislators received an overview of the state's fiscal outlook for Fiscal Year 2026–27 (FY27) and beyond, delivered by Kirk Fulford from the Legislative Services Agency and Finance Director Phil Poole during a joint session.

The overview accompanied Governor Kay Ivey's budget proposal, which detailed spending priorities and projections for the upcoming fiscal year. Major budget proposals included allocations for the Education Trust Fund (ETF) — the state's primary education budget — with significant resources directed to K-12 and higher education, including career-tech expansion grants and supplemental education funding.

The session also reviewed projected revenues and fiscal constraints for FY27, considering caps on growth rates and historical revenue patterns that influence legislative budgeting limits. The overview provides a foundation for upcoming budget committee work and appropriations planning for the current and next fiscal year. State agency budget hearings begin on Monday, January 26, and continue on Monday, February 2.

### **Education Trust Fund (ETF)**

The total proposed FY 2027 appropriations are approximately \$10.48 billion, a ~5.8% increase over FY 2026. The ETF budget supports all elementary/secondary education, two-year colleges, and public universities for the 2026-27 school year. Additionally, a FY 2026 supplemental appropriation of \$419.7 million has been proposed.

### **State General Fund (GF)**

The proposed total for FY 2027 is \$3.69 billion, reflecting a slight decline (~\$28.5 million) from the prior year due to lower projected interest earnings. The GF funds non-education programs, such as Medicaid, corrections, health and human services, public safety, courts, and other state operations.

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*Here's your weekly bill tracking update! We're here to keep you in the loop on the latest actions by lawmakers. Remember, reporting on a bill isn't an endorsement; it's about highlighting issues that affect Alabama's children and families. For more details on additional bills, visit us [online!](#)*

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**BILLS ON THE MOVE**

**HB10 (Rep. Randy Pettus):** This bill would provide that a nonfelony or water safety offense committed by a child 14 or 15 years of age, other than driving under the influence or operating a vessel while under the influence, is not a delinquent act for purposes of juvenile proceedings. The House Public Safety and Homeland Security Committee gave the bill a favorable report.

**HB31 (Rep. Reed Ingram):** This bill would require the Alabama Department of Human Resources to request a waiver from Food and Nutrition Services (FNS) to exclude soda, energy drinks, candy, and prepared desserts from the definition of "eligible food" for SNAP benefits. The bill was immediately carried over. We anticipate that a substitute will be introduced soon.

**HB41 (Rep. Matt Simpson):** The bill classifies first-degree rape, sodomy, and sexual torture as capital offenses for victims under 12. It requires that offenders sentenced to life serve at least 30 years before becoming eligible for parole. Rep. Simpson addressed concerns about decreased reporting of family cases due to the death penalty threat and the bill's constitutionality. He clarified that capital charges need grand-jury approval and a jury penalty phase. The House Judiciary Committee approved the bill, which was read a second time in the House and placed on the calendar.

**HB50 (Rep. Terri Collins):** This bill would create the Imagination Library of Alabama Program to provide free age-appropriate books to children throughout the state through Dolly Parton's Imagination Library. It passed the House (the chamber of origin) and was sent to the Senate Education Policy Committee.

**HB93 (Rep. David Faulkner):** This bill is called "Trey's Law." It would make any agreement that prevents someone from sharing information about certain acts of sexual abuse unenforceable. It is a companion bill to SB30, sponsored by Sen. Matt Woods. The House Judiciary Committee gave it a favorable report. It was read in the House for the second time and placed on the calendar.

**SB30 (Sen. Matt Woods):** This bill is called "Trey's Law." It would make any agreement that prevents someone from sharing information about certain acts of sexual abuse unenforceable. It is a companion bill to HB93, which is sponsored by Rep. David Faulkner. The Senate Judiciary Committee gave it a favorable report. It was read in the Senate (chamber of origin) for the second time and placed on the calendar.

**SB31 (Sen. Matt Woods):** This bill revises the definitions of "credible threat" and "threat," along with the elements of first and second-degree terrorist threats, increasing their criminal penalties. It requires public K-12 schools to immediately suspend any student charged with making a terrorist threat and notify law enforcement. The bill mandates a one-year suspension for such students and outlines conditions for their readmittance, alongside restitution if found guilty. The bill received a favorable report from the Senate Judiciary Committee, read for the second time in the Senate (chamber of origin), and placed on the calendar.

Advocacy Tip of the Week

## What does advocacy mean?

Before you begin your advocacy journey, you must first understand what exactly advocacy is. Advocacy is the use of pressure and influence on people and/or organizations, the “decision-makers”, who have the power that you need to achieve your goal.

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