

From: [Arellano, Joey](#)
To: [FLHouseDems](#)
Subject: FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: Legislators on Today's LBC Meeting
Date: Wednesday, February 15, 2023 5:48:30 PM

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Feb. 15, 2023

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Democratic Legislators on Today's LBC Meeting

TALLAHASSEE, Fla. – The Legislative Budget Commission (LBC) met today to discuss the 2023-24 budget in preparation for the 2023 Legislative Session. Democratic legislators provided the following statements.

“I am very troubled by the governor’s sign-off on reallocating \$15 million in taxpayer dollars to underwrite the regime change at New College. Not only is the process circumventing the legislative scrutiny and accountability this spending deserves, but the end destination for these dollars remains obscure and undefined. It may also be illegal. This isn’t about the viability of New College. This is all about the political ambitions of Florida’s governor,” said **Senator Bobby Powell (D-West Palm Beach)** and Democratic Legislative Budget Commission member.

“As a new member of the LBC, my concern comes from the process of which this item is being presented to the LBC instead of through the regular Legislative Session. Using the LBC for an amendment that is not time sensitive circumvents the ability of all State legislators to consider and debate this increased spending,” said **Representative Christine Hunschofsky (D-Parkland)** and Democratic Legislative Budget Commission member. “There are no specifics identified as to where the money is going. There is a need for funding to renovate dorms and other buildings on NCF’s campus. I will continue to work with my colleagues throughout this budget process and advocate for a better use of taxpayer dollars.”

“This is such a huge conservative grift — last week New College of Florida’s new conservative Board of Trustees proved that when they agreed to pay Richard Corcoran nearly \$1 million to be the interim President of the college. And today the approval of this legislative budget request was not only potentially illegal, but further solidifies how DeSantis’ hostile takeover of New College will only be successful by throwing public money at it. That’s pathetic, especially since my GOP colleagues like to preach about the free market; if this takeover really is a good idea then let the free market decide and if you’re really a fiscal conservative then prove it by not wasting public money on political cronies. Students are demanding that any new money going to NCF be spent on infrastructure — not this. We should listen to students and stop funding this conservative grift,” said **Representative Anna V. Eskamani (D-**

Orlando).

New College of Florida Students for Educational Freedom add, “New College has actual investments we need. Much of the school’s infrastructure is in dire need of rejuvenation. Total deferred maintenance is estimated at \$61 million; \$15 million put towards that would go a long way towards improving conditions on campus and thus retention. NCF already has an excellent student faculty ratio of 6:1, there is no need to spend this on new professors. Please put NCF’s interests first by putting this money where it is most needed.”

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