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HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

ALABAMA STATE HOUSE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

March 1, 2021

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HOUSE TO VOTE ON BILL INCREASING LEGISLATIVE OVERSIGHT ON EXECUTIVE AGREEMENTS EXCEEDING \$10 MILLION

The Alabama House is scheduled to consider this week a bill by Rules Committee Chairman Mike Jones (R - Andalusia) that provides the Legislature with an additional layer of oversight and information on executive branch contracts, leases, and agreements exceeding \$10 million.

“It is important that we maintain a system of checks and balances, and the Legislature must be able to access important information about agreements that obligate the General Fund to substantial expenditures,” Jones said. “This bill provides an additional layer of oversight on large executive branch agreements in a manner that is fair, transparent, and, most of all, constitutional.”

Speaker of the House Mac McCutcheon (R - Monrovia) said he supports Jones’s legislation and believes it provides taxpayers with the accountability they deserve.

“Whenever an administration enters into agreements involving millions of taxpayer dollars, the Legislature deserves to have its questions answered and any concerns addressed,” McCutcheon said. “Rep. Jones’s legislation offers a commonsense method of protecting taxpayers and reassuring lawmakers when large sums of dollars are being obligated.”

Under the provisions of House Bill 392, which appears first on Tuesday’s special order calendar, a new Joint Legislative Oversight Committee on Obligation Transparency that consist of the chair and vice chair of the House Ways and Means General Fund Committee, the chair and vice chair of the Senate Finance and Taxation General Fund Committee, and the ranking minority members of both committees would be formed.

The oversight panel will be tasked with reviewing state agency agreements and obligations totaling at least \$10 million or five percent of the agency’s annual appropriation.

If no objection is raised by the committee within 45 days of an agreement being submitted, it will be deemed approved, but if it is disapproved, the agreement will remain suspended until final adjournment of the next regular session, which will provide the Legislature an opportunity to address any issues by statute or other legislative action, if necessary.

Jones noted that the legislation applies only to future, not current, contracts, leases, and other obligations.