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WV budget moves from conference committee

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By Ann Ai, Political Reporter - [email](#)

CHARLESTON - The state's budget for Fiscal Year 2013 is on the move. The budget bill, Senate Bill 160, has been in conference committee meetings since Monday for members of the House of Delegates and the Senate to strike a compromise.

The committee approved it Wednesday afternoon.

According to the West Virginia Center for Budget and Policy, there are a number of differences in department-level appropriations that vary from Gov. Earl Ray Tomblin's budget and the Senate and House versions.

The total budget amount is the same in each version. The legislature is Constitutionally bound to submit a balanced budget.

Tomblin's budget recommended more than \$26 million to the legislative branch from the general revenue budget. The House version only appropriates about \$25 million, and the Senate version appropriates about \$24 million. Both the House and Senate take the cuts from the joint expense account.

The House and Senate versions of the budget appropriate less than the Tomblin's suggested appropriation to the Judicial Branch.

Tomblin's suggested budget gave more than \$48 million to the executive branch, and both the House and Senate versions of the bill stay close to that.

The Department of Commerce budget has many differences among proposed budgets. Tomblin suggested about \$70 million, the Senate suggested more than \$69 million and the House suggested about \$71 million.

Both the Senate and House agree in setting aside even more money for education - about \$11 million more than Tomblin's suggested allowance.

The House and Senate compromise on Senate Bill 160 will be presented to all lawmakers Thursday, and members will be able to study it through Friday.



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