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## Updated: House moves closer to Senate's proposal for cutting state-university budgets

BY BILL COTTERELL, JIM ASH AND STEPHEN PRICE • FLORIDA CAPITAL BUREAU • APRIL 28, 2009  
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State workers and universities won't see the drastic cuts that House leaders were proposing under a deal worked out this evening, House Speaker Larry Cretul said.

The House wanted to save \$330 million by imposing a 4 percent pay cut on workers earning as little as \$26,400, and a 5 percent cut for those earning \$80,000 or more, a move that would have affected 133,000 workers.

But the House has agreed to move closer to a Senate position that socked managers earning more than \$100,000 with a 1 percent pay cut, and slashed \$40 million by eliminating 2,200 full-time positions, 800 of them filled with live bodies. The Department of Corrections would absorb the brunt of the job loss under the Senate plan.

House and Senate negotiators began conference meetings this evening, but they won't be negotiating the state-worker pay portion. Cretul, R-Ocala, and Senate President Jeff Atwater, R-North Palm Beach, will work out the details this weekend.

"That, in general terms, has been agreed to," Cretul said. "These issues will be handled by the presiding officers."

The House also agreed to move much closer to the less punishing Senate proposal for cutting state-university budgets.

The House originally called for \$460 million in cuts, a move that would have slashed Florida State University's budget by \$77 million and Florida A&M University by \$22.7 million.

The House has agreed to move much closer to a Senate plan, which would have cut FSU by \$6.9 million and FAMU by \$6.9 million.

Right now, Cretul said, the two chambers are only about \$90 million apart.