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Legislature to address budget and immigration law in final week

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HUNTSVILLE, AL (WAFF) - Lawmakers will meet Wednesday in Montgomery to tackle final items of the legislative session.

Among them is a bill that could raise court fees to help fund the state's court system, which has suffered from budget cuts.

The state senate will also argue a bill that makes revisions to Alabama's immigration law.

But the larger task of deciding the state's general fund budget lies ahead. The hurdle is overcoming a \$184 million shortfall in the budget.

State programs like Medicaid could bear a brunt of the deficit burden.

"With \$184 million we could fully fund the senior programs in Alabama, mental health, Medicaid, that's where our priorities ought to be," said Sen. Roger Bedford (R-Russellville).

The state senate approved its version of the general fund budget late last week. It is aimed to switch the deficit from Medicaid to the state's prison system.

The house and senate will iron out differences in their versions of the budget on Wednesday, which is the last day of the regular legislative session.

Lawmakers, however, expect to begin a special session to redraw legislative districts.

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Lawmakers will convene in Montgomery on Wednesday to tackle a bill that could raise court fees and revisions to the immigration law.

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