

TICUA Policy Update

February 3, 2016

Higher Education Bills Begin to Move

This week has provided some movement on a number of bills impacting the higher education community. Newly introduced bills have been assigned committees and are expected to be heard in the committees over the next few weeks. Bills being assigned to the Senate Education Committee and House Education Administration and Planning Subcommittee include the Governor's bill impacting out-of-state institutions operating in Tennessee, TICUA's veteran friendly bill, and TICUA's state authorization clarification bill. The Governor's bill impacting the decentralization of TBR governance has been assigned to Senate Government Operations and has yet to be assigned to a House committee. Senator Mike Bell's conceal and carry firearm bill which impacts TICUA members has been assigned to the Senate Judiciary and House Civil Justice Subcommittee.

Governor Haslam Delivers State of the State Address

This past Monday evening Governor Bill Haslam addressed a joint session of the Tennessee General Assembly to deliver his State of the State Address. As expected he highlighted this higher education agenda by outlining his proposed changes to the Tennessee Board of Regents and the THEC's regulatory oversight of out-of-state institutions operating in Tennessee.

Haslam's budget did not quite match the higher education community's budget request for the State's need-based student aid program. The higher education community requested a \$28 million improvement in the program but the Governor placed a \$13.2 million improvement in his budget request. This still represents a significant move in the right direction for needy students. It is estimated that the funds will serve an additional 7,000 students. It is estimated that students choosing TICUA members will benefit from nearly \$4 million of the improvement if the budget request is approved.

Here is a summary of the Governor's higher education funding priorities:

Drive to 55 and THEC Administered Initiatives (\$16.1 million, non-recurring)

- \$10.0 million to expand the Labor Education Alignment Program (LEAP);
- \$2.5 million for College Advising Corps, a new program which will provide one-on-one assistance for students transitioning from high school to higher education;
- \$1.0 million for Veteran Reconnect — competitive funding focused on improving the success of student veterans by enhancing training for faculty and staff who work with veterans;
- \$800,000 for the Institutional Outcome Improvement Fund — new competitive grants to institutions that develop plans for addressing lagging outcomes;
- \$800,000 for Tennessee Promise Forward — new competitive grants to institutions to develop programs to retain Tennessee Promise participants;

\$400,000 for Tennessee Promise Bridge, a structured summer academic program for Tennessee Promise students to address remediation needs prior to fall enrollment;

- \$150,000 for student outreach and Drive to 55 operations;
- \$469,100 to expand the Seamless Alignment and Integrated Learning Support (SAILS) program in Shelby County and to fund the continued development of the SAILS English Program.

Recurring Improvements and Reductions (\$82.1 million)

- \$50.0 million to fund productivity increases through the outcomes-based funding formula (THEC recommended an increase of \$40.9 million);
- \$7.1 million for UT and TBR non-formula units;
- \$9.8 million for increases to group health insurance premiums;
- \$1.6 million for 401k matching;
- \$13.2 million for the Tennessee Student Assistance Awards (TSAA) program to fund approximately 7,110 additional students. Currently an estimated 118,000 eligible students go unfunded;
- \$416,000 to THEC for three positions for the administration and implementation of the Focus On College and University Success (FOCUS) Act;
- \$383,300 to fund administrative functions in THEC, TSAC and the Tennessee Foreign Language Institute.
- A total reduction of 1.6 percent, or \$406,000, across the THEC and TSAC administrative programs, Contract Education, and the Centers of Excellence

Haslam and Alexander to Address the TICUA 60th Annual Meeting

TICUA is celebrating its 60th anniversary at the TICUA 60th Annual Meeting to be held on Tuesday and Wednesday, February 16 and 17, 2016. This year's policy focus will include sessions with Education Chairs Senator Dolores Gresham and Representative Harry Brooks, Finance Chairs Senator Randy McNally and Representative Charles Sargent, House Speaker Beth Harwell, and Lt. Governor Ron Ramsey, Governor Bill Haslam, and US Senator Lamar Alexander. The TICUA Legislative Reception will conclude the events on the 16th. The morning of the 17th will include the President's Open Forum Breakfast. Once again, this year's events will be held in the conference facilities of Waller, Lansden, Dortch & Davis in the Nashville City Center.

Register today by going to http://www.ticua.org/meetings_resources/annual_meeting

TICUA Presidents Make Congressional Visits

On February 2nd TICUA hosted a delegation of member presidents to meet with members of Congress in Washington DC. The presidents met with Senators Lamar Alexander and Bob Corker, Representatives Marsha Blackburn, Jim Cooper, Diane Black, Chuck Fleishmann, Phil Roe, and Steve Cohen. There were a number of topics discussed ranging from student debt to the upcoming reauthorization of the Higher Education Act.

Senator Lamar Alexander will be traveling to Nashville to meet with member presidents at the TICUA 60th Annual Meeting on February 16, 2016. He has asked for a town-meeting type format so that he can gain feedback from the campuses on key issues facing independent higher education.