

TICUA Policy Update

March 31, 2016

Haslam's Higher Ed Bills Move Forward

Governor Haslam's FOCUS Act which is designed to decentralize the governance of the TBR Universities passed the Senate Finance, Ways, and Means Committee this week. The bill has been amended to change appointments to THEC. Under the amendment, the Governor will go from appointing all Commissioners to appointing six. Both Senate and House Speakers will have one appointment a piece as well as one joint appointment. Otherwise, the bill has remained largely intact. The House version has passed the full Chamber last week with a vote of 79 ayes, 19 nays and 2 present but not voting. The Senate version will move to the full Chamber for consideration next week.

Haslam's other higher education package which changes the way THEC authorizes for-profit and all out-of-state institutions passed the House and will be considered by the Senate Chamber next week.

Firearm Bill Passes both House and Senate

The firearm bill which impacts the TICUA membership passed both Chambers. It passed the House last week and the Senate this week. The permissive bill enables TICUA members to allow Tennessee Conceal and Carry permit holders to carry weapons on campus. Campuses exercising this option will need to have their Board of Trustees approve the policy and then notify local law enforcement of the details of the new policy. The permissive nature of the bill also allows a weapons ban to remain place. The bill (SB1559/HB1644), sponsored by Senator Mike Bell and Rep. Tilman Goins, will now go to the Governor for his signature.

Governor's Budget Amendment Passes

Governor Haslam's final budget amendment passed both the House and Senate Finance, Ways, and Means Committees. The amendment serves to put the finishing touches on the State's FY17 budget process. Both Committees passed the amended budget which maintains the \$13.2 million improvement to the State's need-based aid programs. This means that 109th General Assembly is nearing the completion of their work. It is estimated that the legislative session will close sometime in the next three weeks.

Haslam Signs Both TICUA Bills

With his signature Governor Bill Haslam made it law to allow THEC to formally recognize the efforts of TICUA members in serving military veterans. Prior to his action, THEC could only recognize efforts to assist our military men and women at public university and college campuses. TICUA will work with

THEC to disseminate the requirements for recognition as soon as practicable. Watch for a forthcoming email with details.

Just today Governor Haslam signed into law the TICUA state authorization bill. This enacting of this bill will clarify the US Department of Education's requirements for Tennessee to authorize domiciled nonprofit institutions which are exempt from THEC regulatory oversight. THEC will now be empowered to maintain a list of authorized institutions on their website which will allow TICUA members to point to the site in order to satisfy all USDOE state authorization requirements. TICUA will notify campuses once the list is available for reference.

F-1 Visa Reporting Bill Passes Both Chambers

The bill altering nonimmigrant reporting requirements (SB2394/HB2429) has passed both the Senate and House Chambers. Bill sponsors Senator Paul Bailey and Rep. Ryan Williams desire to alter the recently passed requirements to include the reporting of names and addresses of those who cease enrollment during a semester.

In order to satisfy FERPA requirements, the bill was amended to grant the Tennessee Department of Safety subpoena powers to request the information from campuses. Prior to this bill, campuses were required to report annually merely the gross number of F-1 Visa holders at the beginning and end of each term. Now the reporting will be required only when a subpoena is issued to the campus. According to the bill language, the subpoena may request campuses to give the gross number of F-1 Visa holders enrolled at the beginning and end of each term along with the names and addresses of those who were enrolled at the beginning of the enrollment period but not at the end of the same period.

The bill will now go to the Governor Haslam for his signature.