

TICUA Policy Update

January 13, 2017

McNally and Harwell Elected Chamber Leaders

On Tuesday, January 10th, Senator Randy McNally was elected by his Senate peers to be Tennessee's new Lt. Governor and Senate Speaker. McNally replaces retiring Senator Ron Ramsey who served in this capacity since 2007. As well, Representative Beth Harwell was re-elected as Tennessee's House Speaker. Harwell will be serving her fourth term as Speaker.

McNally is a long-time friend of TICUA and was awarded the TICUA William Baird Leadership award in 2002. The William Baird Legislative Leadership Award is presented to a state senator who has shown distinguished support for higher education. Senator Baird championed the bill that created the Tennessee Tuition Grant program, the State's first need-based financial aid program and a precursor of the Tennessee Student Aid Award (TSAA).

Harwell, a graduate of Lipscomb University and Vanderbilt University, has also taught at Belmont University and is also a dear friend to TICUA. She was twice awarded (1998 and 2014) the TICUA Harold Bradley Legislative Leadership Award, presented to a state representative who has shown distinguished support for higher education. Representative Bradley championed the bill that created the Tennessee Tuition Grant program, the State's first need-based financial aid program and a precursor of the Tennessee Student Aid Award (TSAA).

Education Committees Announced

The House and Senate named the leadership and members of the Education Committees. The Senate Education Committee will have the same make-up as the 109th General Assembly. It will be chaired by Dolores Gresham with Vice Chairs Reginald Tate and Todd Gardenhire. Other members include Rusty Crowe, Steve Dickerson, Ferrell Haile, Joey Hensley, Brian Kelsey, and Jim Tracy.

The House will continue to have two Education Committees. Most higher education bills will go through the Administration and Planning Education Committee. Once again, Harry Brooks will serve as Chair and the Subcommittee Chair will be Mark White. Eddie Smith has been appointed as Vice Chair, replacing Debra Moody in that post. Members of the Committee include Raumesh Akbari, John DeBerry, Craig Fitzhugh, Roger Kane, Ron Lollar, Jimmy Matlock, Debra Moody, Johnnie Turner, Terri Weaver, Dawn White, and Mark White.

The House Education Instruction and Planning will be Chaired by John Forgety with Roger Kane will serving as Chair of the Subcommittee. The committee's Vice Chair will be David Byrd who is replacing Billy Spivey. Members of the committee include Harry Brooks, Sheila Butt, Bill Dunn, Andy Holt, Sabi Kumar, Harold Love, Joe Pitts, Jay Reedy, Mike Stewart, and Joe Towns.

Two Week Recess Followed by Haslam Address

As is tradition of every new General Assembly, a two-week recess will follow the first organizational week of the First Session. Now that the leadership has been formally elected and the committees have been appointed, the legislature will recess until January 30th. During this break legislators will make office changes that reflect the new leadership assignments.

It is also anticipated that Governor Haslam will deliver the State of the State address on the evening of their return, January 30th. During the speech the Governor will put forth his budget plan for consideration. Legislative budget hearings are slated to begin on February 6th.

Senate Education Committee to Hold Confirmation Hearings

The Senate Education Committee will spend the first two post-recess weeks holding confirmation hearings for public universities' Boards of Trust. Last year the Legislature passed the FOCUS Act which resulted in the creation of independent boards for the six TBR Universities (now referred to as locally governed institutions or LGI's). Consequently, this past fall Governor Haslam appointed over 50 individuals to serve as Trustees for the institutions. Each of these appointments must be confirmed by the Senate. Consequently, no education bills will be scheduled for review until mid-February.

TICUA 61st Annual Meeting February 21 and 22

“Capitol Conversations: Charting the Future” is the theme of the upcoming TICUA 61st Annual Meeting to be held on Tuesday and Wednesday, February 21 and 22, 2017. This year’s policy focus will include sessions with Education Chairs Senator Dolores Gresham and Representative Harry Brooks, Finance Chairs Senator Bo Watson and Representative Charles Sargent, House Speaker Beth Harwell, and Lt. Governor Randy McNally, Governor Bill Haslam, and US Senator Lamar Alexander. The TICUA Legislative Reception will conclude the events on the 21st. The morning of the 22nd 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 to Arrange Congressional Visits

TICUA will once again make arrangements to visit the offices of Tennessee's delegates to Congress during the upcoming NAICU Annual Meeting in Washington, DC. The meeting will be held on Sunday, January 29th through Wednesday, February 1st. Hill visits are being scheduled for Tuesday, January 31st and will be followed by the first ever **Congressional Independent College Caucus** reception in the Kennedy Caucus Room (325 Russell Senate Office Building) from 5 to 8 pm. If you plan to attend the NAICU Annual Meeting or will be in DC during that period and wish to join the visits please contact Dr. Claude Pressnell (pressnell@ticua.org).