

TICUA Policy Update

February 15, 2018

“Complete to Compete” Legislation

The House Education Administration and Planning Subcommittee passed Governor Haslam’s Complete College Tennessee 2018 legislative package on to full committee. “Complete to Compete” is a key component of the Governor’s initiative. Central to the initiative is the “30 in 12” requirement which mandates students participating in the Tennessee Promise and Hope scholarship programs to complete 30 semester hours in 12 months. The goal is to keep students on track to graduate on time. Student aid from these two programs will be reduced if a student fails to complete 30 hours in a year. There is a provision in the bill for students to use college credits earned in high school to apply to the 30 hour requirement, but the details of usage will be ironed out in the rulemaking process. The “30 in 12” requirement will not apply to the Tennessee Student Assistance Award.

TICUA analysis indicates that 29% of the members’ TELS recipients would have a reduction in their scholarship aid under this proposal. It appears that students most negatively impacted will be those majoring in the sciences, are first-generation college students, or are athletes.

TICUA has expressed concerns about the negative implications on TICUA students to key education legislators. Just today TICUA met with the Governor’s office to seek a way to protect those Hope Scholarship recipients who are at-risk through this program.

Dual Enrollment Bill to Favor Community Colleges

Representative David Hawk and Senator Ken Yager have introduced a bill that would require dual enrollment students to first seek to enroll in a community college before they can attempt to enroll in a four-year college or university. The bill was filed to solve an ongoing issue between a select few community colleges and public universities. TICUA was part of a discussion which seeks a non-legislative resolution. Talks have been productive and will hopefully result in the bill being withdrawn, however, TICUA visited with the bill sponsors and has been assured that TICUA members will be amended out of the bill if it moves forward in the current form.

THEC Budget Hearing Addresses Contract Ed

THEC Executive Director Mike Krause presented his budget request before the Senate Education Committee. During his testimony Krause indicated that the public universities will most likely have a tuition increase in the 3% range.

During the hearing Senator Todd Gardenhire raised the issue of the reduction in the Contract Education Program. This program offers student aid to Tennesseans enrolling in approved private college programs not offered by public universities. Specifically, the cut to Southern College of Optometry

(SCO) was addressed. Executive Director Krause explained how the cut came about and indicated that he would welcome a restoration to SCO's program. TICUA President Pressnell testified to clarify the market needs analysis which shows that the state has never funded to the program to the level to meet the state's needs in the optometry profession.

TICUA Hosts DC Hill Visits

TICUA and various member campus representatives made several visits to members of the Tennessee delegation to Congress. TICUA President Pressnell was joined by Dr. Marjorie Hass and Matt Grien of Rhodes College, Dr. Logan Hampton of Lane College, Brent Culberson of Lipscomb University, and Christina West of Vanderbilt University. The contingent visited the offices of Senator Lamar Alexander and Representatives Diane Black, Marsha Blackburn, Jim Cooper, Steve Cohen, and Phil Roe. The primary purpose of the visits was to discuss the reauthorization of the Higher Education Act. Individual office visits concluded with well attended the **Congressional Independent College Caucus** reception.