

# TICUA Policy Update

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January 12, 2018

## Second Session of the 110<sup>th</sup> General Assembly is Underway

The 110th General Assembly of the State of Tennessee reconvened on Tuesday, January 9, 2018, for the second year of the two-year session. This is the first year in their new legislative offices at the Cordell Hull Building. It is expected that the upcoming legislative session will be brief to allow members to raise funds for the fall election cycle. The current plan is to adjourn by mid-April.

Over two dozen members of the General Assembly will be retiring or running for a different elected office in 2018, including many members of the House and Senate Education committees. House Speaker Beth Harwell (R - Nashville), a gubernatorial candidate will also be pushing for a quick session so that she may return to the campaign trail.

## Haslam's Final State of the State Address

Governor Bill Haslam will deliver his last State of the State address on Monday, January 29, 2018. Since Haslam is not eligible for re-election in 2018, this will be his final opportunity to address higher education issues in the State's budget.

Highlights of Haslam's Governorship include sizable increases in the State's need-based aid program, creation of free community college through the Tennessee Promise and Reconnect programs, significant student aid for members of the National Guard through the STRONG Act, and allowing for independent governance of the TBR Universities. It is anticipated that Haslam's focus will turn from access to completion in his final address.

## TSAA Improvement

Both, the Tennessee Student Assistance Corporation Board and the Tennessee Higher Education Commission have proposed a \$20.5 million improvement in the Tennessee Student Assistance Award, the state's only need-based aid program. The improvement in the TSAA will be a huge step toward fully funding the grant program.

The budget recommendation would eliminate the existing \$6.8 million annual transfer from lottery funding and place it in state appropriations. This will allow the lottery funding to remain in the Hope scholarship program and strengthen the Tennessee Promise Reserve.

The remaining \$13.7 million portion of the improvement will go to serve an additional 7,600 students. Despite increased appropriations over recent years, approximately 46,000 eligible applicants are unfunded due to limited program funding. TSAC's goal is to fully fund these eligible student applicants over a four-year period. The increase of \$13.7 million over the current funding level would bring the total number of awarded students to approximately 61,400.

## Senator Jon Lundberg Named to Education Committee

Senator Jon Lundberg has been named to the Senate Education Committee. Lundberg joined the Senate in the 110<sup>th</sup> General Assembly but served in the House of Representatives from the 105<sup>th</sup> to the 109<sup>th</sup> General Assemblies. He represents the 4<sup>th</sup> Senate District which includes King University.

## TICUA 62<sup>nd</sup> Annual Meeting February 20 and 21

"Preparing for Political Change" is the theme of the upcoming TICUA 62<sup>nd</sup> Annual Meeting to be held on Tuesday and Wednesday, February 20 and 21, 2018. This year's agenda will feature a Tennessee Gubernatorial Forum to allow the 2018 candidates to outline their higher education agenda. As well, we have invited key policy leaders to come visit with us about the future of higher education in Tennessee. Invitations have been extended to Governor Bill Haslam, US Senator Lamar Alexander, Lt. Governor Randy McNally, House Speaker Beth Harwell, Senate Education Chair Dolores Gresham, House Education Chair Harry Brooks, Senate Finance Chair Bo Watson, and House Finance Chair Charles Sargent. The TICUA Legislative Reception will conclude the events on the 21<sup>st</sup>. The morning of the 22<sup>nd</sup> 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](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 through Wednesday, February 4-7, 2018. Hill visits are being scheduled for Tuesday, February 6<sup>th</sup> and will be followed by the **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](mailto:pressnell@ticua.org)).