

TICUA Policy Update February 22, 2008

TICUA Honors Senator Lamar Alexander

On Tuesday, February 19, 2008 TICUA honored US Senator Lamar Alexander with the Gold Medallion for Excellence in Education Policy. The award was conferred based on the Senator's tireless work in Washington on behalf of independent higher education. NAICU's President David Warren noted that there is no one more important to higher education policy in Washington than Senator Alexander due to his experience as a Governor, US Secretary of Education, and having been a university President. This marks the second time TICUA has honored Alexander during his tenure in the US Senate.

Senate Lottery Subcommittee on Recurring Funds

The first meeting of the Senate Education Subcommittee on lottery scholarships occurred this past Wednesday. The members met for two hours listening to their colleagues make the case for nearly 50 bills to change the way the lottery scholarship is currently awarded. In the end, the list was whittled down to 13 bills which were recommended to be considered by the full Senate Education Committee. Consideration of an additional 15 bills was delayed until next week's meeting of the Subcommittee.

The Senate Education Committee appears to remain committed to the \$22 million price tag for any changes to the base program. Consequently, the full members will have to make some tough decisions about what changes survive the Committee process.

Reauthorization of the HEA Moves to Conference

March 31st marks the end of the continuation of the Higher Education Act. Without an additional continuation or the passage of the reauthorization of the Higher Education Act, Congress will have to deal with the possible shutdown of the federal student aid programs. The US House and Senate are moving quickly in conference to reconcile the differences between the respective versions of the bill. It seems likely that there will be a compromise on the HEA by the end of March.

At minimum the bill could include possible over 100 new campus wide reporting requirements, onerous college cost provisions, and possible mandates related to our teacher education programs. This could make it one of the most regulatory reauthorizations in recent history.

It is urgent that we contact our members of Congress to highlight some of our most pressing concerns within the next couple of weeks.