

## ***TICUA Policy Update February 23, 2007***

### ***Nearly 60 Legislators Attend TICUA Event***

Nearly 60 state legislators attended the TICUA Gala Event this past Tuesday, February 20, 2007. The Event was a part of the 51<sup>st</sup> TICUA Annual Meeting of the Membership. Senator Jamie Woodson and Representative Mark Maddox were honored for their support of independent higher education during the evening festivities.

### ***TICUA Presidents Meet with House Republican Caucus***

Representative Harry Brooks invited TICUA member presidents to meet with him and other members of the House Republican Caucus following the TICUA Annual Meeting. Ten TICUA member presidents took time to visit legislative plaza to attend the Senate and House Education Committee meetings as well as meet with caucus members. During the meeting the presidents were able to highlight the need to increase the state's need-based aid programs and desired adjustments to the lottery scholarship programs.

### ***Lottery Bills***

Thursday, February 22, 2007 marked the filing deadline for the Senate to file bills for the first session of the 105<sup>th</sup> General Assembly. The House's deadline was last week. Prior to the Senate's deadline there were already over 60 bills filed to modify the Tennessee Education Lottery Scholarship programs. The bills range from increasing the amounts to providing a special scholarship for Eagle Scouts. The goal of the Senate Education Committee is to hear all the bills and work toward collapsing all the bills of merit into a single omnibus bill.

### ***TICUA Testifies Before Senate Education Committee***

TICUA was asked to present the findings of its most recent policy paper which provides an overview of the 34 year history of the Tennessee Student Assistance Award. During the testimony TICUA was able to outline a number of incremental policy solutions to fully funding the TSAA program. TICUA is asking the General Assembly to consider a 15% annual increase in appropriation, use the interest income off of the excess lottery revenue, and legislatively mandate that all funds appropriated for the TSAA be exempt from reversion policies.

The testimony was well received and Senate Education Chair Jamie Woodson filed a bill to implement the reversion exemption following the hearing. The committee has also expressed interest in further examining the possibility of using interest revenue from a portion of the lottery excess to supplement the grant program.

To see the full report [www.ticua.org/publications](http://www.ticua.org/publications)

## ***TICUA Testifies Before the Tennessee Board of Nursing***

TICUA was asked to testify before the Tennessee Board of Nursing on behalf of the leadership of the independent colleges and universities, University of Tennessee, Tennessee Board of Regents, and the Tennessee Higher Education Commission. TICUA requested further revisions in the latest draft of new rules regulating higher education nursing programs. The higher education community has been united in working with the staff of the Board of Nursing to make adjustments that would not threaten the productivity of our nursing programs. A joint letter from TICUA, THEC, TBR, and UT was sent to the Board during their December hearing protesting the earlier draft of the rules. Since that time nearly all of our concerns were incorporated into subsequent drafts.

After over four hours of testimony and tedious rules review, the Board adopted all the changes recommended by the Tennessee higher education community.