

TICUA Policy Update
January 23, 2006

***Second Session of the 104th General Assembly
Begins with Extraordinary Session***

The Tennessee General Assembly continues to meet in extraordinary session. The ethics reform bill recommended by the Joint Legislative Committee on Ethics was considered in the State Government subcommittee of the House State and Local Committee, and was recommended to the full State and Local Committee for consideration beginning this afternoon. The Senate Committee of the Whole continued to consider amendments to the bill and will meet again on Wednesday.

The Governor conceded defeat on the three-week special session schedule he tried to impose on the General Assembly and re-scheduled the State of the State address from January 30 to February 6, and that date is tentative. It is apparent that the extraordinary session will last at least four weeks, through the week of January 30.

*Submitted by Dick Lodge of Bass, Berry, & Sims, PLC

TICUA Pushes for More Need-based Aid

TICUA continues to push the General Assembly to consider more robust funding for the neediest college qualified Tennesseans. The State's need-based aid program (Tennessee Student Assistance Award – TSAA) is woefully under-funded. Currently, the program serves roughly 25, 000 students with \$42 million. It would take an additional \$37 million to fully fund all eligible students. Incremental steps should and can be taken to begin to address this shortfall.

TELS Foster Care Provision Should Include TICUA Members

During the final days of last year's session a lottery scholarship provision for foster care children was passed. During the negotiations it was understood that the provision would be available for students choosing to attend an eligible private college or university. Once the statute was filed the Tennessee Higher Education Commission noted that the provision only applied to students attending a public university.

TICUA is already working with Senator Jamie Woodson and Representative Les Winningham to expand the provision to include eligible private colleges and universities. The amendment is currently being drafted.

Contract Education: Best Buy for Tennessee

TICUA continues to educate members of the General Assembly to the benefits of the State's Contract Education program. This program expands the academic program offerings of the state by contracting with private colleges and universities. Private institutions often offer unique academic programs that are not offered by state campuses. By contracting with TICUA members the state avoids program duplication and provides a wider array of academic programs without the larger expense of starting new programs.

The program is currently under-utilized leaving Tennesseans without space in these desired programs. It is a goal of TICUA to help legislators better understand the cost efficiency of expanding the current contracts. Contracting with private colleges and universities to take advantage of unused capacity for state residents is a resourceful way to maximize limited higher education appropriations.

TICUA Celebrates 50 Years of Service

This year marks the 50th Anniversary of the Tennessee Independent Colleges and Universities Association. In 1956 four private colleges came together to form the collaborative now known as TICUA.

The celebration will take place in Nashville on February 21 and 22, 2006. Over 90 member presidents, legislators, and government officials have registered for the event. All TICUA member presidents should register TODAY!