

TICUA Policy Update
June 1, 2007

Lottery Bills Stalled

There has been no action taken on the Tennessee Education Lottery Scholarship bills for the past few weeks. The House bill is stalled in the House Budget Subcommittee while the Senate version is behind budget consideration in Senate Finance, Ways, and Means Committee. The differences between the two bills are significant; consequently it will take a conference committee to iron them out. The General Assembly is seeking to adjourn by the end of next week which means that both bills will be on a fast-track.

Higher Education Officials Meet on Student Loan Issues

This past week statewide higher education officials met to discuss the Tennessee Attorney General's inquiry into student loans. This was the second such meeting. Colleges and universities from TICUA and the Tennessee Board of Regents have reported receiving letters of inquiry from Attorney General Bob Cooper. The University of Tennessee had yet to poll its membership on whether or not they had received any correspondence.

The meeting included two officials from the Attorney General's office. They remained silent during the meeting. TICUA pressed for future cooperation from General's office so that the inquiry will reach an appropriate conclusion not resulting in measures that could potentially harm students or the institutions.

Senate Passes Tax Hike on Cigarettes

The Senate passed a 42 cent tax hike on cigarettes this past week to fund many of the Governor's education initiatives. One such project is a \$3.8 million improvement for the Tennessee Student Assistance Award, the State's only purely need-based student aid program. The House debated the bill at some length but failed to take action. Both chambers have adjourned until Monday afternoon.