

TICUA Policy Update

March 12, 2010

Privacy Bill Heads to Governor

HB 2847 which indemnifies TICUA and its member institutions from lost data once it is successfully transmitted to the Tennessee Higher Education Commission has passed its final hurdle in the House of Representatives. The House approved the bill on Monday night and now it is on the way to the Governor's desk for signature. It is anticipated that the Governor will sign the bill.

Procurement Bill Passes House State and Local Committee

HB3618 was passed unanimously this week by the House State and Local Committee. The bill will provide TICUA member institutions access to state negotiated contracts and services. The bill now goes to the floor of the House of Representatives for a vote this next Monday night. If passed, it will conform to the Senate bill and be transmitted to Governor Phil Bredesen for his signature.

Higher Education Budget Hearings

Representatives from THEC, UT, and TBR testified concerning their budgets before committees in both the Senate and the House. Dr. Richard Rhoda, Executive Director of THEC, testified that the overall higher education budget will be cut by 6%. He indicated that the systems have been asked to keep tuition increases to the 5% level. UT has already announced that they are moving toward differentiated tuition levels which have the more costly programs bear a greater amount of the tuition burden.

Rhoda testified that the state's need-based aid program, the Tennessee Student Assistance Award, ran out of funding in mid-February and will most likely leave over 70,000 eligible students unfunded for 2010-11. He also mentioned that the lottery scholarship programs have outpaced the revenue supply and that tough decisions will need to be made in order to bring the program demands back in line with the ticket sales revenue. It is expected that a legislative committee will be formed within the next couple of weeks to explore what adjustments can be made to scholarship program.