

TICUA Policy Update

February 19, 2010

Governor Meets with TICUA Presidents

Governor Phil Bredesen met with Tennessee's private college and university presidents during this week's TICUA Annual Meeting. His opening comments outlined what was accomplished through the passage of the Complete College Tennessee Act of 2010. During his comments he talked about the importance of transfer-of-credit. Bredesen assured the presidents that faculty at four-year institutions should have a say in the quality and content of courses designed to transfer from community colleges. The Governor indicated that he welcomes input from TICUA member institutions in seeking to increase the number of college graduates in Tennessee.

House Education Chair Meets with TICUA Presidents

House Education Chair Harry Brooks met with TICUA presidents during a breakfast meeting of the TICUA Annual Meeting. During his comments he praised the private college sector for their ability to offer high quality degrees and to graduate students in a timely manner. Brooks reiterated his challenge for private colleges to look for ways to graduate students in three years. He went on to discuss the transfer-of-credit issue and encouraged the presidents to base the evaluation of nationally accredited institution credits on content and quality rather than merely on the institution's accreditation status. TICUA has discussed this issue at length with Brooks stating that all transfer courses must be substantively equivalent in content and the faculty must be appropriately credentialed before any transfer could be considered. Brooks indicated that he's sensitive to the quality issue but that colleges need to seek ways to help students transfer from one institution to another.

UPMIFA Bill Passes Senate

Senator Doug Overbey successfully moved SB3046 through the Senate Chamber. The bill, once enacted, will raise the amount of a restricted fund from \$25,000 to \$150,000 which restrictions can be removed if the designated purpose cannot be utilized within a 20 year period. The House companion bill HB 3047, passed House Judiciary Civil Practice and Procedure Subcommittee this week and is scheduled for House Judiciary this next Tuesday.

Procurement and Indemnity Bills Move along

SB3512 which provides access to state negotiated contracts and services by TICUA members passed the Senate Education Committee. Also receiving Senate Education committee approval was SB2793, which provides indemnification against lost or misused data for TICUA and its members once information is successfully transmitted to the state. Both bills will be scheduled for the full Senate sometime this next

week. HB2847, the House companion of the indemnification bill, passed House Judiciary Civil Practice and Procedure Subcommittee and will be before the full Judiciary Committee next Tuesday.

Over 300 Students say THANKS!

To date, over 300 students have responded to the call from the Tennessee Student Aid Alliance to say THANK YOU for the Tennessee Student Assistance Award (TSAA). by sending over 600 emails to the hill. Students from TICUA member institutions as well as the public colleges and universities have sent over 600 emails of thanks to the Legislative Plaza.

The TSAA is the state's only purely need-based aid program and serves about 25,000 students attending post-secondary institutions in Tennessee. Over 4,300 students receive \$4,000 grants through this program to attend a TICUA member institution. Governor Bredesen's budget calls for a \$3.2 million recurring improvement in the student aid program.

Please encourage students who receive the TSAA to continue writing their emails of thanks today!

Lottery Discussion Continues

During his comments to TICUA's member Presidents, Governor Phil Bredesen indicated that it is his position that nothing should be done to alter the lottery scholarship amounts during this legislative session. This position is shared by House Education Chair Harry Brooks. Election year pressures as well as the recent introduction of new lottery games has some legislators thinking it might be sensible to wait a year and see if revenue is not actually closer to the program requirements. This view is not shared, however, by Senator Randy McNally, Chair of the Senate Finance, Ways and Means Committee. According to McNally's staff, he believes structural changes are necessary to avert an even more difficult problem in the future.

In the meantime, officials from TICUA, UT, TBR, THEC, and TSAC met again on Thursday to explore the financial impact of various programmatic changes to the scholarship programs. Next week the group plans on meeting again and this time with Senator McNally's staff.