

TICUA Policy Update

March 27, 2008

Charter School Bill

Senator Jim Tracy's bill to permit TICUA member institutions to partner with the State of Tennessee to found and operate charter schools passed the Senate Education Committee. Current law prohibits TICUA members from starting a charter school. The charter school concept focuses on helping at risk students through a more entrepreneurial administration and teaching methods. Charter schools, although under the supervision of the Department of Education, are given much more freedom to try new and innovative approaches. The bill has yet to be reviewed by House Education Committee. Representative Beth Harwell is sponsoring the measure in the House.

Transparency Bill Passes Senate Education Committee

Senator Rosalind Kurita moved her transparency bill through the Senate Education Committee. TICUA worked with Senator Kurita to get the bill in an acceptable form. As currently drafted, the bill requires TICUA members to provide information on how to obtain the institution's transfer of credit policy prior to making tuition payments. This information (such as a web link) can be included in the student's acceptance letter or other form of communication sent to the student prior to registration. The bill's onerous reporting requirements will not impact TICUA members. The bill is on calendar for the House Education Subcommittee for Special Initiatives this next week.

Education Committees Focus on Lottery Scholarship

Both the Senate and House Education Committees are reviewing the various proposals to change the lottery scholarship programs. The Senate began their review this week by examining last year's lottery omnibus bill with the intention of amending it with the subcommittee work done over the past few weeks. The House Committee began hearing explanations of the bills but did not take any action. This next week holds great promise for both chambers to begin moving the lottery proposals through the committee process.

Charitable Gift Annuity Bill Passes Senate

SB4180 has passed the Senate and is on the calendar for the House Government Operations Committee. TICUA and other non-profits have been working the Administration to reach a compromise that would accomplish the regulatory needs of the Department of Commerce and Insurance while not inhibiting legitimate fundraising activities. TICUA solicited feedback from

member institutions concerning various drafts of the bill and nearly all of those suggested changes have been incorporated into the version passed by the Senate. It is anticipated that the House will move the bill rather quickly through the committee process.