

USHE Weekly Legislative Report
Fourth Week: February 18-22, 2013
By Dave Buhler, Commissioner of Higher Education
February 25, 2013

This is the fourth weekly report for 2013 on the legislative session from the perspective of the Utah System of Higher Education, for distribution to Regents, Presidents, and Trustees.

Overview. Some bills received final passage this week by both the House and Senate and await the Governor's signature. Additional bills surfaced relating to higher education including HB 139 and HB 340 (detailed below).

The Higher Education Appropriations Subcommittee held its final presentations this week with a recap of our budget priorities from me and very informative presentations from two USHE presidents: University of Utah's David Pershing and Salt Lake Community College's Cynthia Biouteau. The Subcommittee is scheduled to meet one final time this Wednesday where budget priorities will be finalized and submitted to the Executive Appropriations Committee for further prioritization. Similarly, the Infrastructure and General Government Subcommittee will prioritize building requests.

**Please Note: The annual
Higher Education
Legislative Luncheon,
sponsored by Rocky
Mountain Power and
Questar, will be on Friday,
March 1st, 12 Noon, State
Capitol Rotunda.**

All Legislators, Regents,
Presidents, Trustees and
Student Body Presidents are
invited. (Please arrive by
11:30.)

Revised state tax revenue figures agreed upon by the Governor and legislative leadership are expected to be announced this week which will help paint the overall budget picture for the remainder of the legislative session.

Key Legislation of Interest to USHE

- **HB 28, Campus Safety Amendments*** by Rep. Don Ipson, would allow administrative officers at USHE institutions to dismiss individuals who trespass on the property of higher education institutions who disrupt the peace. The bill was supported unanimously by the Senate Education Committee and awaits a vote by the full Senate for final passage.
 - **HB 139, Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics Action Center** by Rep. Val Peterson, creates educational programs for science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM). The bill attempts to enhance STEM education primarily in grades 6, 7, 8 grades by enhancing teacher development, adopting best practices on college readiness, and improved tracking of student progress in core STEM subject areas. It will be heard for a second time this morning in the House Workforce and Economic Development standing committee.
 - **HB 254, College Credit for Veterans*** by Rep. Paul Ray, requires USHE colleges and universities to award credit for certain military service training and experience after meeting with a higher education student advisor. The bill passed the full Senate last Friday and awaits the Governor's signature.
 - **HB 340, Snow College Economic Development and Workforce Preparation Advisory Committee*** by Rep. Kay L. McIff, would modify the name, membership, and duties of Snow's Technical Education Advisory Committee to include representation from area businesses and county government leadership. The bill awaits a committee hearing in the House.
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- **SB 42, Medical School Admissions Funding*** by Sen. John Valentine, authorizes the University of Utah School of Medicine to increase the number of students admitted by 40 students for a total of 122 students annually; and restricts the 40 additional admissions to students who demonstrate a strong connection to Utah. The bill passed the full Senate unanimously and is in the House awaiting further consideration.
- **SB 51, Higher Education Tuition Waivers*** by Sen. Stephen Urquhart, removes the cap on the number of waivers allotted to institutions of higher education for nonresident students who meet certain academic and admission requirements; and extends alumni legacy nonresident scholarships at institutions of higher education to grandchildren of alumni. This bill is scheduled to for consideration in the House Education Committee Monday afternoon.
- **SB 100, Higher Education Scholarship Amendments*** by Sen. Jerry Stevenson, makes modifications to the Regents' and New Century scholarship programs to streamline the application process, raise standards to improve completion, and addresses concerns raised by constituents. This bill is scheduled for consideration in the House Education Committee Monday afternoon.
- **SB 175, Assessment of College Readiness*** by Sen. Howard Stephenson, requires K-12 schools to administer college readiness assessments which include a college admissions test that is most commonly submitted to local universities (e.g. ACT). USHE supports this bill as it streamlines the assessment of college readiness of high school students and applies a standard assessment statewide. The bill passed the Senate Education Committee and is up for consideration by the full Senate.
- **SB 132, Utah Medical Education Council Amendments*** by Sen. Wayne Harper, this bill moves the functions of the Utah Medical Education Council into the Commissioner's Offices as well as expands its scope to nursing professionals. The Council will still maintain its authority through its current board appointed by the Governor, to bridge the gap between public/private health care workforce and education interests. The bill passed the Senate last week and has been assigned to the House Health and Human Services Committee.
- **SB 162, Concurrent Enrollment Amendments*** by Sen. Stephen Urquhart, clarifies and modifies several elements of legislation he sponsored, and enacted, last year that were administratively burdensome, based on feedback from USHE. The bill passed with only one dissenting vote on the House Floor after being amended. A final unanimous concurring vote occurred on Thursday. The bill now awaits the signature of the Governor.
- **SB 169, Education Task Force** by Sen. Stuart Reid, would create a task force of 14 legislators to review and make recommendations on long-term policies regarding public and higher education. The focus of the task force includes: workforce alignment, integration between education entities, improvement of the state's economic prosperity, and standards to be competitive in the United States and the world. A final report of the committee would be required in December 2013. The bill was passed out with a favorable recommendation by the Senate Education Committee and is awaiting consideration by the full Senate.
- **SCR 5, Concurrent Resolution Endorsing the Utah Education Excellence Commission*** by Sen. Jerry Stevenson, expresses strong support for achieving the goal that 66% of Utah's adults will hold a postsecondary degree or certificate by the year 2020; expresses the Legislature's determination to work with the Governor and Utah's education stakeholders to achieve the 66% goal through increased innovation and investment. This bill passed the Senate unanimously and is awaiting further consideration in the House.

* USHE has taken an official position in support; ** USHE has taken an official position in opposition.

For more information on legislation, committee agendas, or to view or listen to floor debates, see: <http://le.utah.gov/>
 Assistant Commissioner for Public Affairs Spencer Jenkins contributed to this report.