



LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

A Briefing for Faculty & Staff of the University System of Georgia No. 3, February 15, 2011
"Creating a More Educated Georgia"

General Assembly Considers USG Relevant Legislation

The fifth week of the legislative session came to an end Friday, February 11th. Several bills that have potential impact on the University System have been introduced in the General Assembly. Five of the bills introduced come from the House of Representatives and one from the Senate. Of the six bills already introduced, three concern immigration.

IMMIGRATION

HB 59 - Declare Postsecondary Education a Public Benefit

House Bill 59, sponsored by Representative Tom Rice, would prohibit admission of undocumented students to all public postsecondary institutions in the state.

The bill proposes an amendment to current Georgia code "relating to verification of lawful presence within United States, so as to clarify that postsecondary education is a state and local public benefit; to reserve postsecondary education benefits to citizens and lawfully present and eligible aliens; to require verification of the eligibility for such applicants for such benefits through the federal SAVE program; to provide for related matters; to repeal conflicting laws; and for other purposes." (2/16/2011 - House Committee Favorably Reported)

HB 87 - Illegal Immigration Reform and Enforcement Act of 2011

House Bill 87 is sponsored by Representative Matt Ramsey. The bill will enact the "Illegal Immigration Reform and Enforcement Act of 2011" as well as amend current code to require several provisions related to security and immigration compliance.

This bill also seeks amendment to official Georgia code relating to "verification of lawful presence within the United States, so as to provide for identification cards by applicants for public benefit." (1/31/2011 - House Second Readers)

SB 40 - Security and Immigration Compliance

Senate Bill 40, sponsored by Representative Jack Murphy, is similar to House Bill 87 and includes additional requirements and penalties for public and private employers. (2/03/2011 - Senate Read and Referred)

WORKING WITH TECHNICAL COLLEGE SYSTEM

HB 176 - Credit Articulation Agreements Act

Representative David Casas is the sponsor of House Bill 176, would "provide for state-wide degree transfer agreements between state institutions of higher education," to be accomplished within a particular time-frame. (2/9/2011 - House Second Readers)

HB 186 - Quality Basic Education Act

House Bill 186, sponsored by Representative Randy Nix, is known as the "pathways" bill.

In summary, the bill would require the USG or TCSG to accept a student for admission if the student was given credit for a for a high school Career, Technical, and Agricultural Education (CTAE) course and if that CTAE course has the academic core curriculum standards embedded in it.

In addition, the student would also have to pass an End of Course Test for the high school academic core course credit. (2/9/2011 - House Second Readers)

TUITION

HB 74 - Tuition Grant Assistance for the Georgia Military College

House Bill 74 is sponsored by Representative Rusty Kidd. The bill seeks to amend Georgia code as it relates to tuition grant assistance for North Georgia College and State University.

The bill, if passed, would provide "tuition grant assistance for students attending Georgia Military College similar to military students attending North Georgia College and State University." (2/16/2011 - House Committee Favorably Reported)

You can track bills using this web site: http://www.usg.edu/government/legislative_tracking. 🏠

FY 2011 Amended Budget Update

The House passed its version of the FY11 amended budget during the week of February 11th. The following changes pertaining to the University System were approved by the House:

1. Reduction of \$401,408 for Worker’s Compensation premiums for the institutions;
2. Restoration of \$300,000 to offset reductions to the Agricultural Experiment Station; and
3. Restoration of \$44,459 to offset reductions to optometry scholarships provided through the Southern Regional Education Board.

The Senate is currently working on their version of the FY11 amended budget. System officials expect that version of the budget to be passed the week of February 22nd, at which time it will be sent to a conference committee to resolve any differences that may exist between the two versions. 