



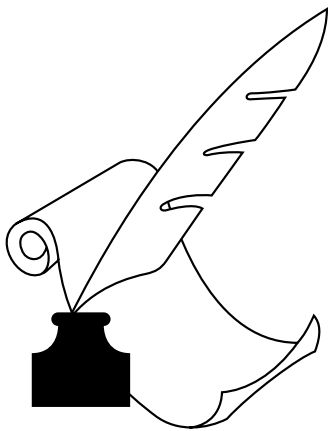
LEGISLATIVE UPDATE



A Briefing for Faculty & Staff of the University System of Georgia No. 5, February 5, 2007

“Creating a More Educated Georgia”

Key Legislation of Interest to the University System of Georgia



A number of bills introduced by members of the Georgia General Assembly are of special interest to the University System of Georgia (USG), either because they directly impact students, faculty and staff or because they affect the way the System interacts with other agencies and keeps its records.

Officials at the Board of Regents are monitoring these key pieces of legislation as various committees process them. Here is a list of bills being followed and where they stand now:

House Bill 72 – This bill would create the Georgia Homeland Security in Education Act of 2007. The act would require private and public post-secondary institutions to report international students who violate the terms of their student visas by withdrawing from or not attending classes to federal, state and local authorities. HB 72 replicates provisions of the Student and Exchange Visitor Information System, through which the government monitors student visas.

Sponsor: Rep. Burke Day of Tybee Island

Status: Currently being reviewed by the House Education Committee

House Bill 80 – HB 80 requires the Board of Regents, which has administrative responsibility for the Georgia Public Library Service, to consider local economic conditions in apportioning state funds to Georgia’s county and regional public library systems each year. The bill also would require a state audit of each library system with certain exceptions.

Sponsor: Rep. Chuck Sims of Ambrose

Status: Currently being reviewed by the House Education Committee

House Bill 154 – This bill would create the Intellectual Diversity in Higher Education Act, requiring all USG institutions to report to the Board of Regents and post on their websites annually information about their efforts to ensure intellectual diversity and the free exchange of ideas.

Sponsor: Rep. Tom Rice of Norcross

Status: Currently being reviewed by the House Higher Education Committee

Key Legislation

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House Bill 141 – This legislation would exempt textbooks from the state sales tax.

Sponsor: Rep. Bill Hembree of Winston

Status: Currently being reviewed by the House Way and Means Committee

House Bill 152 – Under the provisions of this legislation, home-schooled students scoring in the top 10 percent of the SAT or ACT would qualify to receive a HOPE Scholarship.

Sponsor: Rep. John Lunsford of McDonough

Status: Currently being reviewed by the House Higher Education Committee

Senate Bill 35 – This bill would require the Board of Regents to develop a policy giving home-schooled students who apply for admission as undergraduates consideration equal to that of students from public and private schools.

Sponsor: Sen. Chip Pearson of Dawsonville

Status: Currently being reviewed by the Senate Higher Education Committee

Senate Bill 74 – This proposed amendment to the Returning Hero Education Act would require the University System to give preferred status to combat veterans of the Armed Services who graduated from a Georgia high school and apply for admission to USG institutions.

Sponsor: Sen. J.B. Powell of Blythe

Status: Currently being reviewed by the Senate Higher Education Committee

Senate Bill 75 – This bill would require the Georgia Student Finance Commission (GSFC) to establish minimum statewide standards for honors courses. GSFC also would be required to determine students' eligibility for post-secondary scholarships, grants and loans by weighting grades received for honors, advanced placement and international baccalaureate courses to account for their rigor.

Sponsor: Sen. Michael Meyer von Bremen of Albany

Status: Currently being reviewed by the Senate Higher Education Committee 

Next Up

The Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on Higher Education chaired by **Sen. John Wiles** has asked officials from the University System of Georgia and the Department of Technical and Adult Education to attend a meeting on Wednesday, Feb. 7, to discuss the Amended Fiscal Year 2007 and Fiscal Year 2008 budgets.