



LEGISLATIVE UPDATE



A Briefing for Faculty & Staff of the University System of Georgia No. 8, February 26, 2007

“Creating a More Educated Georgia”

Mid-Session Status Report on Legislation of Interest to the University System

Tuesday, Feb. 27, will be Day 25 of the 40-day legislative session, an opportune moment to review the status of pieces of legislation of special interest to the University System of Georgia (USG). Here is a list of bills and resolutions being followed by officials at the University System Office and where they now stand:

Bills and Resolutions in the House Higher Education Committee

House Bill 63 – This bill would enable the Georgia Student Finance Authority to provide direct loans to students at a rate of 1 percent annually.

Sponsor: Rep. Alan Powell of Hartwell

Status: Pending in the House Rules Committee

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: Under review 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Status: withdrawn

House Bill 131 – This bill would make surviving spouses of military personnel killed in combat eligible to receive the Georgia HERO Scholarship.

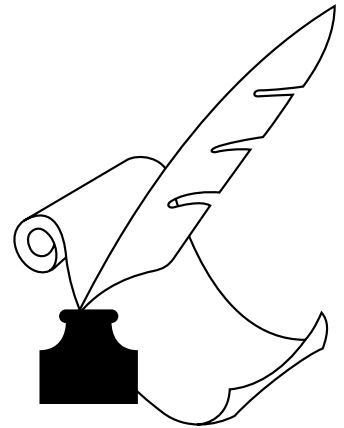
Sponsor: Rep. Billy Horne of Newnan

Status: Under review by the House Higher Education Committee

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

Sponsor: Rep. Bill Hembree of Winston

Status: Under review by the House Ways and Means Committee; hearing scheduled Feb. 26



Status of Legislation

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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: Pending in the House Rules 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: Under review by the House Higher Education Committee

House Bill 216 – This bill would establish a minimum statewide standard for honors courses so eligibility for HOPE and other postsecondary scholarships can be reliably based on a “B” average.

Sponsor: Rep. DuBose Porter of Dublin

Status: Under review by the House Higher Education Committee

House Bill 228 – This bill would remove the hourly caps on HOPE scholarships.

Sponsor: Rep. DuBose Porter of Dublin

Status: Under review by the House Higher Education Committee

House Bill 243 – This bill would revise the HOPE Scholarship Program so that enrollment in post-secondary courses at a branch of the Georgia Department of Technical and Adult Education would not count against the hourly caps for HOPE grants.

Sponsor: Rep. Bill Hembree of Winston

Status: Pending in the House Rules Committee

House Bill 246 – This bill would create the HOPE Literacy Scholar Program, using HOPE scholars to assist in reading literacy programs in public pre-kindergarten, kindergarten, and elementary schools. The bill also would grant participating HOPE scholars in danger of losing their scholarships an additional quarter or semester to pull up their grades.

Sponsor: Rep. Carolyn Hugley of Columbus

Status: Under review by the House Higher Education Committee

House Bill 458 – This bill would require all USG institutions offering four-year degrees to establish teacher-education programs.

Sponsor: Rep. Lester Jackson of Savannah

Status: Under review by the House Higher Education Committee

House Bill 467 – This bill would provide course credit for freshmen entering the University System who have successfully completed the international baccalaureate diploma program.

Sponsor: Rep. Bill Hembree of Winston

Status: Under review by the House Higher Education Committee

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Status of Legislation

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House Bill 474 – This bill would require certain Georgia universities to offer Georgia entities the first opportunity to purchase or license intellectual property produced by the university.

Sponsor: Rep. Mike Cheokas of Americus

Status: Under review by the House Higher Education Committee

House Resolution 246 – This resolution would urge the Board of Regents to establish intercollegiate wrestling programs.

Sponsor: Rep. James Mills of Gainesville

Status: Pending in the House Rules Committee

House Resolution 322 – This resolution would create a Joint Study Committee on Continuing Education and Collegiate Sports Programs for Students with Disabilities.

Sponsor: Rep. Ben Harbin of Evans

Status: Under review by the House Higher Education Committee

Senate Bill 28 – This bill would provide for the development of consumer-driven health-insurance plans by the Commissioner of Insurance, Pharmacies and Pharmacists.

Sponsor: Sen. Judson Hill of Marietta

Status: Being reviewed by the Senate Insurance and Labor Committee

Senate Bill 33 – This bill would authorize the development and implementation of a statewide first-responder building mapping information system.

Sponsor: Sen. Ed Harbison of Columbus

Status: Being reviewed by the House Higher Education Committee

Senate Bill 68 – This bill would enact the Career Academies Act, establishing career academies as charter schools of the Department of Technical and Adult Education.

Sponsor: Sen. Dan Weber of Dunwoody

Status: Pending in the House Rules Committee

Bills and Resolutions in the Senate 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: Pending in 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: Pending in the Senate Higher Education Committee

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Status of Legislation

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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: Pending in the Senate Higher Education Committee

Senate Bill 111 – This bill would prevent revenue collected by the University System for tuition from lapsing.

Sponsor: Sen. Seth Harp of Midland

Status: Pending in the Senate Rules Committee

Senate Bill 169 – This bill would enable the Georgia Student Finance Authority to provide direct loans to students at a rate of 1 percent annually.

Sponsor: Sen. William Hamrick of Carrollton

Status: Pending in the Senate Higher Education Committee

Senate Bill 196 – This bill would provide scholarships for the children of military personnel killed or disabled in combat.

Sponsor: Sen. Kasim Reed of Atlanta

Status: Pending in the Senate Higher Education Committee

Senate Resolution 125 – This resolution would reserve funds raised by the Georgia Lottery for the HOPE Scholarship Program and other tuition grants, scholarships or loans enabling state citizens to attend college in Georgia, for voluntary pre-kindergarten, and for educational shortfall reserves.

Sponsor: Sen. Joseph Carter of Tifton

Status: Favorably reported by the Senate Higher Education Committee 