

ICCTA ACTION ALERT

March 4, 2005

The 94th Illinois General Assembly has completed its first month with the passing of the deadline for the introduction of bills. All House and Senate committees have been organized and are conducting hearings on the 6,183 bills that were filed.

On February 16, Gov. Rod Blagojevich delivered his proposed state budget for Fiscal Year 2006 to a joint session of the General Assembly. The Governor has proposed the same level of funding in FY 2006 for community colleges as they received in FY 2005. State funding for universities would also remain the same in FY06 as it was in FY05.



Bills of Interest to Community Colleges

The following is a listing of bills with ICCTA staff-recommended positions (support, oppose or monitor). The ICCTA Board of Representatives will consider these staff recommendations at its March 11-12 meeting in Lisle.

House Bill 152 **Freedom of Information Act - Delays (Froehlich)**

ICCTA Position: **OPPOSE**

Amends the Freedom of Information Act. Authorizes a court to award reasonable attorney fees and costs and assess a fine not to exceed \$1,000 if it finds that a public body denied or delayed access to a public record on improper or unreasonable grounds or for the sole purpose of delaying access without good cause. **HB 152 has been held in committee.**

HB 158 **Property Tax Cap - Changes CPI to ECI (Eddy)**

ICCTA Position: **SUPPORT**

Amends the Property Tax Extension Limitation Law in the Property Tax Code. Provides that "extension limitation" means (a) the lesser of 5% or the percentage increase in the Employment Cost Index or, upon referendum approval, the Consumer Price Index during the 12-month calendar year preceding the levy year, or (b) the rate increase approved by the voters. Defines "Employment Cost Index" as the Employment Cost Index for total compensation for civilian, state and local government workers published by the U.S. Department of Labor. Sets forth referendum procedures to allow for the calculation of the extension limitation based upon the CPI.

HB 545 **Student Voter Registration (Black)**

ICCTA Position: **SUPPORT**

Permits an election authority to consider specified factors when determining the residence of a college student applying for voter registration.

HB 581 **College Payments by Credit Card (Feigenholtz)**

ICCTA Position: **MONITOR**

Provides that any unit of local government and any community college district that has the authority to accept the payment of funds for any purpose shall (currently, "is authorized, but not required to") accept payment by credit card. Makes corresponding changes. Preempts home rule. Amends the State Mandates Act to require implementation without reimbursement.

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HB 715 Student Voter Registration (LaVia)

ICCTA Position: MONITOR

Amends the Election Code. Requires each public university and college in Illinois, at the beginning of each academic year, to ask each student who is an Illinois registered voter if the student wishes to change his or her voter registration address. If so, requires the school to submit those changes to the appropriate election authorities electronically. Requires election authorities to accept such changes of student address and waives any signature requirement for a change of address with respect to those students.

HB 718 Energy Conservation - Colleges and Universities (Osterman)

ICCTA Position: MONITOR

Provides that a unit of local government, public university, or public community college may enter into a guaranteed energy savings contract if it finds that the amount it would spend on the energy conservation measures recommended in the proposal would not exceed the amount to be saved in either energy or operational costs, or both, within a 20-year period (currently, "within a 10-year period") from the date of installation, if the recommendations in the proposal are followed.

HB 724 Community College Board Elections (Granberg)

ICCTA Position: MONITOR

Makes a technical change in the Public Community College Act concerning the election of board of trustee members.

HB 750 / School Funding Reform (Miller)

(Also Senate Bill 750 – Meeks)

ICCTA Position: MONITOR

Provides for school funding reform initiatives that were advanced last year. This bill contains content and is filed as a mechanism to continue conversations.

HB 972 Capital Projects Continuing Appropriations (Granberg)

ICCTA Position: MONITOR

Creates the Capital Project Continuing Appropriation Act. Provides a continuing appropriation from the General Revenue Fund for certain capital projects that have been begun or authorized but are not funded in the state budget as it becomes law. Requires certification of the amount of the continuing appropriation by the Governor's Office of Management and Budget. Authorizes GOMB to direct reimbursement of the General Revenue Fund from other sources of funding that may become available. Amends the State Budget Law to require the Governor to include in the proposed budget funding for certain ongoing and newly authorized capital projects.

HB 1041 Property Tax Referendum Disclosure on Ballot (Franks)

ICCTA Position: MONITOR

Provides that the ballot question concerning increasing or decreasing a rate limit shall include the purpose for the rate change and shall reference the resolution of the taxing district adopting the rate change. Provides that the ballot shall have printed thereon, but not as part of the proposition submitted, an estimate of the approximate amount to be levied upon a residence in the taxing district with a market value of \$100,000 under the current rate and under the proposed rate.

HB 1051 Teacher Scholarship Program (Mendoza)

ICCTA Position: MONITOR

Makes changes concerning Minority Teachers of Illinois scholarships with respect to exceptions to the teaching obligation requirement. Makes changes concerning the Illinois Future Teacher Corps Program with respect to the teaching obligation requirement. Makes changes concerning special education teacher scholarships with respect to eligibility, certification of applicants, and the teaching obligation requirement. Repeals the Child Development Teacher Scholarship Act.

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HB 1057 Open Meetings Act - Definition (Flider)

ICCTA Position: MONITOR

Amends the Open Meetings Act. Redefines a "meeting" to include gatherings, whether in person or by telephone call, electronic means, or other means of interactive communication, of a majority of a quorum of the members of a public body held for the purpose of discussing public business (now, "a gathering of a majority of a quorum of the members of a public body held for the purpose of discussing public business").

HB 1361 Energy Management Reporting Requirement (McCarthy)

ICCTA Position: MONITOR

Requires each public university and community college district to submit an annual report to the Illinois Board of Higher Education or Illinois Community College Board detailing the university's or district's plan and progress for demand-side energy management. Provides that this report must be posted on the university's or district's Internet website, if any. Requires the IBHE and ICCB to publish on their Internet websites a comparison of demand-side energy management programs so a user can easily identify which energy management programs are most effective.

HB 1373 Community College Shell Bill (McCarthy)

ICCTA Position: SUPPORT

Amends the Public Community College Act. Makes a technical change in a section concerning state grants. This is an ICCB shell bill for future use.

HB 1374 Equalization Grant Formula (McCarthy)

(Also **SB 472 – Trotter**)

ICCTA Position: SUPPORT (provisional)

Amends the Public Community College Act to make changes concerning equalization grants to community college districts. Provides that equalization grants shall be distributed to districts based upon the higher of (i) an EAV-based equalization calculation using the equalized assessed valuation of property within the district or (ii) a PTE-based equalization calculation using the property tax extension within the district. This ICCB bill is intended to be advanced only if an appropriate level of state funding is available.

HB 1461 Energy Conservation Plan (Flider)

ICCTA POSITION: MONITOR

Requires each public university and community college district to develop and implement a comprehensive plan for energy conservation at the university or community college by January 1, 2007.

HB 1474 City College of Chicago Collective Bargaining (Delgado)

ICCTA Position: OPPOSE

Provides that the collective bargaining between the City Colleges of Chicago and an exclusive representative of its employees may include certain subjects. Removes certain management rights gained by the City Colleges of Chicago in the 1993 Chicago school reform initiative.

HB 1487 Faculty Member Appointment to ICCB (McCarthy)

ICCTA Position: MONITOR

Provides that beginning July 1, 2005, one of the 11 members appointed to the ICCB by the Governor must be a faculty member at an Illinois public community college. This bill is an initiative of the Illinois Federation of Teachers.

HB 2515 Transfer Courses Posted on the Web (Schock)

ICCTA Position: SUPPORT

Requires IBHE to implement and administer a statewide program, using the World Wide Web, to assist students, advisors, faculty, and administrators from public and private institutions of higher education in obtaining consistent and accurate information about transfer courses and their applicability towards degree completion by publishing course equivalency guides, academic programs, courses offered, transfer course evaluations, and degree requirements. The initiative is subject to appropriation (see HB 2534).

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HB 2534 Appropriation for Transfer Course Initiative (Schock)

ICCTA Position: SUPPORT

Appropriates \$350,000 from the General Revenue Fund to the IBHE for a course transferability program created in HB 2515.

HB 2570 Community College Fund Transfers (Phelps)

(Also SB 1836 – Althoff)

ICCTA Position: MONITOR

Provides that a community college district may, by proper resolution of the board following a public hearing set by the board or chairperson of the board, permanently transfer moneys from the Working Cash Fund to the fund of the district most in need of the funds being transferred so long as the aggregate amount of transfers from the working cash fund in any fiscal year does not exceed 90% of the maximum amount credited to the working cash fund during the fiscal year.

HB 3686 ICCTA Shell Bill (McCarthy)

ICCTA Position: SUPPORT

Amends the Public Community College Act. Make a technical change in a section concerning nominating board of trustee members. This is an ICCTA shell bill available for future use if necessary.

HB 3720 Construction Bidding Preferences in District (Lyons)

ICCTA Position: SUPPORT

Amends the Public Community College Act to provide that in awarding contracts involving an expenditure in excess of \$10,000, the board of trustees of a community college district shall comply with the same requirements that apply to the awarding of state contracts under the Business Enterprise for Minorities, Females, and Persons with Disabilities Act. Provides that at least 5% less than the percentage preference given under the Business Enterprise for Minorities, Females, and Persons with Disabilities Act shall be established as a goal to be awarded to businesses located within the community college district. Amends the State Mandates Act to require implementation without reimbursement.

HB 3722 Transfer of GED Functions to ICCB (Brady)

(Also SB 463 – Maloney)

ICCTA Position: SUPPORT

Amends the School Code and the Public Community College Act. Transfers all powers and duties of the Illinois State Board of Education and State Superintendent of Education with regard to high school equivalency testing under the School Code to the ICCB.

HB 3869 Career Pathways Partnership (Myers)

ICCTA Position: SUPPORT (if amended)

Requires the IBHE, in consultation with the Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity, to develop a regional education and career pathways partnership program to target high-wage jobs in key economic sectors and address business and industry needs by providing employers with a well-prepared workforce. Provides that after the program is developed, but no later than January 1, 2007, the Board shall file a report with the General Assembly describing the program and estimating the cost of the program. Provides that the Board may not implement the program until after this report has been filed and funding to implement the program has been appropriated. ICCTA is recommending that the bill be amended to include ICCB in consultation.

SB 2 Education Funding Reform (del Valle)

ICCTA Position: MONITOR

Creates the Education Funding Reform Act of 2005. This shell bill could be used to promote advances in an initiative to revamp education funding.

SB 131 Baccalaureate Degrees at Harper College (Garrett)

ICCTA Position: MONITOR

Provides that the Board of Trustees of William Rainey Harper Community College may create a pilot baccalaureate program under which the district may establish and offer bachelor's degrees in two fields of study if certain conditions are met, including requiring (i) that the degree programs not compete with any nearby public university, (ii) that the college has identified and documented unmet workforce needs, (iii) that the degree programs not require any additional funding from local taxes or the state, (iv) that the ICCB and IBHE approve the offering of the degree programs, and (v) that the pilot program expire four years after the initial offering of the degree programs, unless otherwise extended by law. **SB 131 is in a Senate subcommittee for study.**

SB 226 Open Meetings Act - 72 Hours Notice (Cullerton)

ICCTA Position: OPPOSE

Amends the Open Meetings Act. Requires that public bodies with websites maintained by their own staff must post on their websites the following information, for the specified periods, with respect to their meetings: (I) the agenda of a regular meeting, until the meeting is conducted; (ii) the annual schedule of regular meetings, until public notice of another schedule is approved; (iii) notice of a regular meeting, until the meeting is conducted; and (iv) minutes of an open meeting, for at least 60 days after posting. Changes the deadline for any type of public notice of the agenda of a regular meeting from 48 to 72 hours before the meeting.

SB 445 Limited Use of Social Security Numbers (Martinez)

ICCTA Position: MONITOR

Prohibits private and public universities, community colleges and private business and vocational schools from printing an individual's social security number on any card or other document required for the individual to access products or services provided by the institution. Provides criminal penalties.

SB 463 Transfer of GED Functions to ICCB (Maloney)

(Also HB 3722- Maloney)

ICCTA Position: SUPPORT

Amends the School Code and the Public Community College Act. Transfers all powers and duties of the State Board of Education and State Superintendent of Education with regard to high school equivalency testing under the School Code to the Illinois Community College Board. **SB 463 is on 2nd reading in the Senate.**

SB 472 Equalization Funding Formula (Trotter)

(Also HB 1373 – McCarthy)

ICCTA Position: SUPPORT (provisional)

Amends the Public Community College Act. Makes changes concerning equalization grants to community college districts. Provides that equalization grants shall be distributed to districts based upon the higher of (I) an EAV-based equalization calculation using the equalized assessed valuation of property within the district or (ii) a PTE-based equalization calculation using the property tax extension within the district. This ICCB bill is intended to be advanced only if an appropriate level of state funding is available.

SB 750 School Funding Reform (Meeks)

(Also HB 750 – Miller)

ICCTA Position: MONITOR

Provides for school funding reform initiatives that were advanced last year. This bill contains content and is filed as a mechanism to continue conversations.

SB 1399 ICCB FY 2006 Budget (Trotter)

ICCTA Position: MONITOR

Makes appropriations for the ordinary and contingent expenses of ICCB for the fiscal year beginning July 1, 2005.

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SB 1484 Property Tax / Income Tax Swap (Winkel)

ICCTA Position: MONITOR

Provides for an increase from 3% to 5% in the Illinois income tax rate and a decrease in local property taxes levied for the operations of school districts. Additionally provides additional state grant funding for universities and community colleges.

SB 1487 SURS – Restoration of Two Years of Sick Leave Credit (Clayborne)

ICCTA Position: SUPPORT

Amends the State Universities Article of the Illinois Pension Code. Provides that an employee is entitled to receive service credit for up to 2 years (now, up to one year) of unused sick leave.

SB 1628 Higher Education Inspector General (Maloney)

ICCTA Position: MONITOR

Amends the State Officials and Employees Ethics Act and does not affect public community colleges. Creates the Higher Education Inspector General, appointed by the IBHE, for the public institutions of higher education (now, under the Executive Inspector General appointed by the Governor).

SB 1836 Transfer Working Cash Funds (Althoff)

(Also HB 2570 – Phelps)

ICCTA Position: MONITOR

Provides that a community college district may, by proper resolution of the board following a public hearing set by the board or chairperson of the board, permanently transfer moneys from the Working Cash Fund to the fund of the district most in need of the funds being transferred so long as the aggregate amount of transfers from the working cash fund in any fiscal year does not exceed 90% of the maximum amount credited to the working cash fund during the fiscal year.

SB 1857 Open Meetings Act - Review (Cullerton)

ICCTA Position: MONITOR

Amends the Open Meetings Act. Provides that a public body's failure to strictly comply with the requirements of the semi-annual review of closed meetings minutes does not make the minutes or verbatim recordings open to the public or available in judicial proceedings (other than those for violations of the Act) if the public body, within 60 days of the discovery of its failure, conducts the review and reports in an open meeting that the need for confidentiality remains or no longer exists.

House Joint Resolution 24 Joint Task Force on Community Colleges (McCarthy)

ICCTA Position: SUPPORT

Creates a Joint Task Force on Community Colleges to review the present community college system and its future. The task force names legislators and community college representatives as members.

**☞ ICCTA Lobby Day is May 4 –
call 1-800-454-2282 to register today ☞**

The following budget analysis was prepared by the Illinois Community College Board.

To: Chief Executive Officers

From: Geoff Obrzut, President/CEO
Don Wilske, Chief Financial Officer

Date: Thursday February 17, 2005

Subject: Governor Blagojevich's Fiscal Year 2006 Operating and Capital Budgets

On Wednesday, Governor Rod R. Blagojevich delivered the fiscal year 2006 budget address for the State of Illinois. The Community College System operating budget is recommended for level funding. The budget excludes one time special restricted appropriations and reflects a \$120,000 reduction in the small college grant for two districts whose eligibility status changes in fiscal year 2006. Keep in mind that while the aggregate totals have not changed that the individual district allocations will be different in comparison to previously published ICCB/IBHE recommended funding levels due to data changes. Equalization allocations are based on the original calculation methodology and do not reflect changes recommended by the Finance Advisory Committee and adopted by the ICCB in November 2004. In addition, \$15 million is being recommended for City Colleges of Chicago as was appropriated in fiscal year 2005. Appropriate equalization funding levels and implementation of equalization formula changes remains an item of discussion as the budget development process continues. As a reminder, concurrent statutory language changes would be required to change the equalization formula calculation. The Governor recommended \$50.0 million of enhanced construction program funding (4th of 5 years since no capital funding provided in fiscal year 2005) and \$9.1 million of capital renewal funding for community college projects. No project specific community college capital recommendations were made. Level funding is recommended for both the Adult Education and Family Literacy System budget and the Career and Technical Education System budget.

Community College System Operating Budget Highlights:

- * Level funding for the Base Operating and Equalization grants.
- * Small College grants were reduced by \$120,000.
- * Third year of the planned three year funding of the Funding Formula Impact grant is \$5.5 million.
- * Business and Industry Component of the Workforce Development grant and P-16 Initiative grant are recommended for level funding.
- * Level funding for the Lincoln's Challenge grant program.

The detail of the operating budget can be viewed on the linked document listed below.

Adult Education and Family Literacy System Budget and Career and Technical Education System Budget Highlights:

- * Level funding for both of these budgets is recommended for fiscal year 2006.
- Summary details can be viewed on the linked document listed below.

Below is the link to district allocations and summaries of the Community College System Operating Budget, Capital Renewal Budget, Adult Education and Family Literacy System Budget, and the Career and Technical Education System Budget.

http://www.iccb.org/HTML/pdf/sysfin/fy06_governor_level.pdf

If you have any questions, please contact the ICCB System Finances staff.

cc: Chief Financial Officers

ICCTA ACTION ALERT

April 8, 2005

The Illinois General Assembly is concluding its work for the week and will return to Springfield on April 11 for a full week of legislative activity. Friday, April 15, is the deadline for passage of legislation from the house in which it was introduced. When the General Assembly adjourns on April 15, the spring session will be halfway completed in terms of its scheduled work. (The actual date that the General Assembly might complete its business this year has been the subject of some speculation.)



ICCTA will compile a listing of all bills of interest to community colleges that have passed out of the first house after the April 15 deadline.

The dominant focus of the General Assembly continues to be the state's Fiscal Year 2006 budget and related issues. Budget hearings have been held for higher education and most state agencies. Most observers predict that serious budget discussions will begin in May.

UNOFFICIAL APRIL 5, 2005 ELECTION RESULTS

On April 5, local consolidated elections were held throughout the state. Included were elections for community college board members in all community college districts (except the City Colleges of Chicago).

There are 266 elective community college board seats in the 39 community college districts throughout the State. 105 seats were decided in the election as follows:

- 72 incumbent board members won re-election
- 12 incumbent board members were defeated
- 33 new trustees were elected
- 21 incumbent trustees did not stand for re-election and chose to retire.

- 5 community colleges had 4 board seats up for election
- 21 community colleges had 3 board seats up for election
- 11 community colleges had 2 trustee seats up for election
- 1 community colleges had 1 board seat up for election

Richland referendum passes

By a 2-1 margin, voters approved a referendum for Richland Community College that transferred the bond levy rate to operations. There was no increase in the overall tax rate as bonds were retired.

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Illinois Community College Trustees Association Action Alert **April 21, 2005**

The State Universities Retirement System (SURS) has posted several documents describing the impact of Governor Blagojevich's proposed pension changes on SURS beneficiaries. Please note that **NO LEGISLATION has yet been filed**, and so we do not currently have specific bill numbers for reference or action.

The following is reprinted from the SURS web site at <http://www.surs.org/news/Features/feature.htm#FY06Budget>.

FY'06 Budget Recommendations: Benefit Changes Affecting Current Participants and "New Hires" and Changes to the Statutory Retirement System Funding Program

The description of proposed benefit changes and changes to the current retirement system funding program are described and analyzed in a series of documents that may be accessed by:

The document entitled [The Administration's Budget Proposals for FY'06 as They Relate to SURS](#) describes the proposed benefit changes.

The document entitled [Administration Budget Book Effective Rate of Interest \(ERI\) Limit](#) shows the amount by which future benefits for current SURS participants would be diminished if the proposed limit on the maximum rate of interest that can be credited to participant retirement accounts for purposes of the SURS "Money Purchase" Formula were enacted.

The [April 9, 2004 MEMORANDUM](#) document reviews the Illinois court decisions that interpret Art. XIII, section 5 of the Illinois State Constitution which says, in effect, pension benefits are a matter of contractual right and they cannot be diminished or impaired.

The document entitled [Examples of the Effect of the Administration's Revised COLA Adjustment for "New Hires"](#) contains examples showing the amount of inflation compensation (in percent change year-over-year) that would be provided to "new hires" when they retire in the future.

The document entitled [Actuarial Impacts on SURS of FY'06 Budget Recommendations](#) analyzes the effects on SURS of the proposed benefit changes and changes in the funding program. The benefit changes and funding changes are analyzed separately and on a combined basis.

The document entitled [State Contribution 'Savings' from Proposed SURS Benefit Changes but Without Limitation on ERI and Without New COLA for New Hires](#) shows what happens to the expected reduction in state contributions to SURS (i.e. savings to the state) if the proposed post-retirement adjustment (COLA) change for new hires is not enacted and if the limit on the rate of interest that can be credited to participant accounts for purposes of the "Money Purchase" Formula is not enacted or is found to be unconstitutional.

The document entitled [Examples of the Effect of the Administration's Proposed ERI Limitation on SURS Money Purchase Formula Calculations](#) contains examples that show, on a case-by-case basis, the amount by which benefits would be reduced for current participants if the proposed interest rate limit were enacted.

The document entitled [Draft Legislation](#) contains the proposed law changes.

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Illinois Community College Trustees Association Action Alert **May 2, 2005**

LOBBY DAY ISSUES

Below are Fact Sheets for the 2 issues that the Trustees Association will be advocating during our May 4 Lobby Day in Springfield. If you will not be able to participate in Lobby Day in person, please call or e-mail your state lawmakers on May 4 in support of these issues:

- * FY06 funding for Illinois community colleges
- * Senate Bill 2112 (community college trustee on ICCB)

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ILLINOIS COMMUNITY COLLEGE SYSTEM BUDGET FISCAL YEAR 2006

The Governor has recommended Fiscal Year 2006 state funding for the community college system at the same level as was funded in FY05. **This level of state support continues to be the lowest level of funding since FY97 for most colleges.**

The Governor's budget for community colleges holds most budgeted categories at FY05 funding levels. No funding is included to implement the Illinois Community College Board's Funding Task Force recommendations for an equalization funding formula revision.

This budget represents an amount that is approximately 15% below the actual levels appropriated for most community colleges in FY02. In 2002, the average full-time community college student paid about \$50 a credit hour for tuition and fees, or about \$1,500 per year. **In FY06, tuition is estimated to increase to approximately \$70 a credit hour – a 40% increase – for a \$2,100 annual cost.** Most tuition increases are intended to offset the four-year decline in state funding for community colleges.

COMMUNITY COLLEGES DO MORE FOR LESS

Community colleges enroll 60% of all Illinois undergraduate students. Enrollment has continued to climb in the community colleges, yet the colleges will receive \$33 million less from the state in FY06 under the Governor's budget than in FY02.

ILLINOIS BOARD OF HIGHER EDUCATION BUDGET

The Illinois Board of Higher Education is recommending an FY06 budget for community colleges that funds a 2.9% increase above FY05 funding levels. If the BHE recommendations are funded, this would represent the first time in the past four years that state funding will increase. The BHE

funding plan includes funding for the equalization funding formula revisions recommended by the ICCB Funding Task Force. The BHE funding plan does not fund Workforce Development Grants or grants for disadvantaged students as the Governor's plan does.

**SENATE BILL 2112
COMMUNITY COLLEGE TRUSTEE TO SERVE ON THE ICCB**

Sponsors: Senator Deanna Demuzio
Representative Kevin McCarthy

SENATE BILL 2112 requires that a seated community college trustee be appointed to serve as a member of the Illinois Community College Board. The bill originally required that a community college faculty member be appointed to the ICCB and was amended at the request of the Illinois Community College Trustees Association to add a trustee to the Illinois Community College Board.

The appointments to the Illinois Community College Board are for terms of six years. However, under the provisions of SB 2112, the community college trustee may serve on the Illinois Community College Board only as long as he/she remains a local board member.

The Illinois Community College Trustees Association supports Senate Bill 2112. ICCTA believes that elected local board members can bring an important local perspective to the state board. Additionally, the local board member presence can assist state board members in the areas of policy making that affects the 39 community college district boards.

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ICCTA ACTION ALERT

May 11, 2005

The Illinois General Assembly returned to Springfield yesterday (Tuesday, May 10) to work toward the conclusion of its spring 2005 session. The session's scheduled adjournment date is May 27, although few observers predict that adjournment on that date will be met.

For any business conducted through the end of May 31, a simple majority of votes is needed to pass a bill in either the Senate or the House. If the General Assembly does not adjourn before June 1, the Illinois Constitution requires a 3/5 majority vote for passage of legislation with effective dates prior to June 1, 2006. This means that passage of legislation (including a budget for Fiscal Year 2006) would require at least 36 affirmative votes in the Senate and 71 affirmative votes in the House. The Democrats hold the majority in both houses, with 32 members in the Senate and 65 members in the House. On partisan roll calls after May 31, therefore, Republican votes will be required for passage of legislation.

Although lawmakers are considering numerous issues, most attention continues to be centered on the creation of an FY 2006 budget, budget-related issues, and revenue issues.

The following listing of bills affecting higher education and community colleges in particular are moving through the process:

BILLS THAT HAVE PASSED THE HOUSE AND SENATE

Senate Bill 226 **Agenda / Minutes Postings on Web Site (Cullerton)**
ICCTA Position: **MONITOR**

With respect to a public body that has a website maintained by the public body's full-time staff, requires that the public body post on the website (i) notice of any agenda of a regular meeting of the public body's governing body, (ii) notice of all meetings of the governing body, and (iii) beginning July 1, 2006, minutes of regular meetings of the governing body open to the public. Specifies how long the postings must remain on the website. Provides that failure to post on the website does not invalidate meetings or actions of the governing body.

STATUS: Passed both houses; awaiting Governor's signature.

SB 2112 **Faculty Member Appointment to ICCB (Demuzio)**
ICCTA Position: **SUPPORT**

Provides that beginning on July 1, 2005, one of the 11 members appointed to the Illinois Community College Board by the Governor must be a community college board member. Additionally, requires that one of the 11 members appointed to the Illinois Community College Board by the Governor must be a community college faculty member at an Illinois public community college. This bill originally was an initiative of the Illinois Federation of Teachers and was amended by ICCTA to include the "board member" requirement. (SB 2112, which is identical to **House Bill 1487**, was one of ICCTA's priority issues during the association's May 4 Lobby Day in Springfield.)

STATUS: Passed both houses; awaiting Governor's signature.

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OTHER BILLS OF INTEREST TO COMMUNITY COLLEGES

House Bill 715 Student Voter Registration (Chapa LaVia)

ICCTA Position: MONITOR

Amends the Election Code. Requires public institutions of higher learning to post voter registration forms on their websites, include voter registration information and forms in Illinois student registration mailings, and provide voter registration forms at in-person student registration.

STATUS: Passed the House; awaiting 3rd (final) reading in the Senate.

HB 1051 Teacher Scholarship Program (Mendoza)

ICCTA Position: MONITOR

Makes changes concerning Minority Teachers of Illinois scholarships with respect to exceptions to the teaching obligation requirement. Makes changes concerning the Illinois Future Teacher Corps Program with respect to the teaching obligation requirement. Makes changes concerning special education teacher scholarships with respect to eligibility, certification of applicants, and the teaching obligation requirement. Repeals the Child Development Teacher Scholarship Act.

STATUS: Passed the House; awaiting 3rd (final) reading in the Senate.

HB 1487 Faculty Member Appointment to ICCB (McCarthy)

ICCTA Position: SUPPORT

Provides that beginning on July 1, 2005, one of the 11 members appointed to the Illinois Community College Board by the Governor must be a community college board member. Additionally, requires that one of the 11 members appointed to the Illinois Community College Board by the Governor must be a community college faculty member at an Illinois public community college. This bill originally was an initiative of the Illinois Federation of Teachers and was amended by ICCTA to include the "board member" requirement. (*HB 1487, which is identical to SB 2112, was one of ICCTA's priority issues during the May 4 Lobby Day in Springfield.*)

STATUS: Passed the House, 3rd (final) reading in the Senate.

HB 2421 Tuition Assistance for TANF Recipients (Schock)

ICCTA Position: MONITOR

Requires the Department of Human Services to establish a pilot program to provide TANF recipients with assistance in obtaining a post-secondary education degree. Provides that this assistance may include moneys for the payment of tuition, but the Department may not use any moneys appropriated for the operation of the TANF program to pay for tuition under the pilot program. Requires the Department to enter into an interagency agreement with the Illinois Student Assistance Commission for the administration of the pilot program.

STATUS: Passed the House; awaiting 3rd (final) reading in the Senate

HB 2435 Demuzio Governmental Intern Program (Demuzio)

ICCTA Position: SUPPORT

Amends the Southern Illinois University Management Act. Subject to appropriation, requires the president of the University to create the Vince Demuzio Governmental Internship Program for full-time undergraduate students. Sets forth goals for the program. Provides that participating students shall receive academic credit and be compensated financially.

STATUS: Passed the House; awaiting 3rd (final) reading in the Senate.

HB 2515 Transfer Courses Posted on the Web (Schock)

ICCTA Position: SUPPORT

Requires the Board of Higher Education to implement and administer a statewide program, using the World Wide Web, to assist students, advisors, faculty, and administrators from public and private institutions of higher education in obtaining consistent and accurate information about transfer courses and their applicability towards degree completion by publishing course equivalency guides, academic programs, courses offered, transfer course evaluations, and degree requirements. The initiative is subject to appropriation.

STATUS: Passed the House; awaiting 3rd (final) reading in the Senate.

ICCTA Action Alert

May 11, 2005

Page 3

HB 3724 Military Service / Higher Education (Jenish)

ICCTA Position: MONITOR

Requires public institutions of higher education to allow a currently enrolled student who is called to active military service to complete any unfinished courses at a later date at no additional charge, unless course credit has already been given or the student received a full refund upon withdrawing from the course (in which case the student's record shall reflect that the withdrawal is due to active military service). Provides that the student must be given priority over other students in re-enrolling in the course or courses.

STATUS: Passed the House; awaiting 3rd (final) reading in the Senate.

Senate Bill 2 Education Funding Reform (Del Valle)

ICCTA Position: MONITOR

Creates the Education Funding Reform Act of 2005. This shell bill could be used to promote advances in an initiative to revamp education funding.

STATUS: SB 2 has not passed the Senate but may be amended onto other bills later in the session.

SB 445 Use of Social Security Numbers (Martinez)

ICCTA Position: MONITOR

Prohibits private and public universities, colleges community colleges and private business and vocational schools from printing an individual's social security number on any card or other document required for the individual to access products or services provided by the institution.

STATUS: Passed the Senate; awaiting 3rd (final) reading in the House.

SB 463 GED Transfer to the ICCB (Maloney)

ICCTA Position: SUPPORT

Amends the School Code and the Public Community College Act. Transfers all powers and duties of the State Board of Education and State Superintendent of Education with regard to high school equivalency testing and certificates under the School Code to the Illinois Community College Board.

STATUS: Passed the House; awaiting 3rd (final) reading in the Senate.

SB 750 School Funding Reform (Meeks)

ICCTA Position: MONITOR

Provides for school funding reform initiatives that were advanced last year. This bill as amended currently contains no content and is filed as a mechanism to continue conversations.

STATUS: SB 750 has not passed the Senate but may be amended onto other bills later in the session.

SB 1484 Property Tax / Income Tax Swap (Winkel)

ICCTA Position: MONITOR

Similar to SB 750 and HB 750, this bill attempts to provide for an increase from 3% to 5% in the Illinois income tax rate and a decrease in local property taxes levied for the operations of school districts. The bill currently contains no content and is filed as a mechanism to continue conversations.

STATUS: SB 1484 has not passed the Senate but may be amended onto other bills later in the session.

SB 1628 Higher Education Inspector General (Maloney)

ICCTA Position: MONITOR

Amends the State Officials and Employees Ethics Act and does not affect public community colleges. Creates the Higher Education Inspector General, appointed by the Illinois Board of Higher Education, for the public institutions of higher education (now, under the Executive Inspector General appointed by the Governor).

STATUS: SB 1628 has not passed the Senate. Deadline for passage has been extended to May 31.

ICCTA Action Alert

May 11, 2005

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SB 1857 Review of Closed Session Minutes (Cullerton)
ICCTA Position: MONITOR

Amends the Open Meetings Act. Provides that a public body's failure to strictly comply with the requirements of the semi-annual review of closed meetings minutes does not make the minutes or verbatim recordings open to the public or available in judicial proceedings (other than those for violations of the Act) if the public body, within 60 days of the discovery of its failure, conducts the review and reports in an open meeting that the need for confidentiality remains or no longer exists.

STATUS: Passed the Senate; awaiting 2nd reading in the House.

House Joint Resolution 24 Joint Task Force on Community Colleges (McCarthy)
ICCTA Position: SUPPORT

Creates a Joint Task Force on Community Colleges to review the present community college system and its future. The task force names legislators and community college people to be members.

STATUS: Placed on calender order of resolutions.

☛ Call ICCTA at 1-800-454-2282 for legislative updates ☛

ICCTA ACTION ALERT

May 16, 2005

The Illinois General Assembly returns to Springfield later today (Monday, May 16) to resume business. The scheduled deadline for the passage of legislation out of the second house (Senate bills passing of the House and House bills passing out of the Senate) was last Friday, May 13. Although the spring session is scheduled to adjourn on May 27, few observers believe that business this year can be completed by that date. The current schedule calls for lawmakers to meet every day for the next 12 days. If the General Assembly does not adjourn on the scheduled date, then a new session schedule will develop on a day-to-day basis.

Many taxing bodies throughout the state, including community colleges, are inquiring about a School Funding Reform initiative that could come before the General Assembly for a vote. The Governor has promised to veto any legislation that includes an income tax increase. The following is an explanation of a current proposed plan that was prepared by the Taxpayers' Federation of Illinois. ICCTA will continue to monitor this and other funding reform proposals closely as they evolve over the coming days.

SCHOOL FUNDING REFORM INCOME TAX INCREASE / PROPERTY TAX SWAP

Efforts are continuing to advance a dramatically new way to fund Illinois common schools. The Senate sponsors of a measure that defines a new way to fund elementary and secondary schools unveiled their proposed legislation last week at a hearing of a Senate committee. The proposed legislation was added as Amendment #1 to **House Bill 755** by Senators James Meeks (Chicago), Rick Winkle (Champaign) and Miguel del Valle (Chicago). The three sponsors have been working on different versions of proposed school funding reform and came together recently with this proposal. There is a possibility that House Bill 755 with the school funding reform amendment could be called for a vote in the Senate during the next few days.

The proposed school funding reform contains the following basic elements:

- Increases the individual income tax rate from the current 3% rate to 5%. Also increases the corporate income tax rate from the current 4.8% to 8%. (The Illinois Constitution set the corporate income tax rate at 1 5/8 times the personal income tax rate.)
- Abates 30 percent of the K-12 school districts property tax levy based on the 2001 tax year. **No other local tax levies are affected by the proposed legislation.**
- Requires 60 % of the voters to approve an increase in the education operating fund tax rates for school districts.
- Increases the state-supported foundation level for schools from \$4,900 per pupil to \$6,100.
- Adds \$120 million annually for special education and categoricals.
- Adds an additional \$370 million annually for universities and community colleges.
- Increases the states' annual appropriation to the Local Government Distributive Fund by \$190 million
- Allocates \$200 million annually to increase the Earned Income Tax Credit from 5 percent to 20 percent.
- Adds \$150 million annually for a \$30 per year renters' income tax credit.
- Increases the Education Expense Credit from 25 percent of the cost of the education with a maximum credit of \$500, to 50 percent of the cost of the education with a maximum credit of \$1,000.

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ICCTA ACTION ALERT

June 2, 2005

The Illinois General Assembly adjourned the 2005 spring session late Tuesday night (May 31) before a midnight deadline. The expected adjournment concluded a session that focused on budget, revenue and education funding reform issues. The General Assembly is scheduled to return to Springfield for a fall veto session on October 25 - 27 and November 2 - 4.

In the final analysis, the Democrat majorities in the House and Senate passed a Fiscal Year 2006 state budget that is built upon a small natural revenue growth and additionally reduces state contributions to the five state-funded pension systems (including the State Universities Retirement System) by \$1.2 billion during the upcoming year. This budget was approved by a mostly partisan vote without the support of any Republican legislators.

Significant new legislation was approved during the session to provide for the FY 2006 budget, as well as other initiatives.

FY06 STATE BUDGET

The state's \$24 billion General Revenue Fund budget for FY06 was passed via a partisan vote. Some of the elements of the new budget are detailed below:

- Reduces state contributions to the five public pension fund systems by \$1.2 billion. Those dollars will be used to fund state operations in FY06.
- Increases K-12 funding by \$326 million above FY05 levels. Much of the increase is allocated to raise foundation funding levels by \$200 up to \$5,164 per student.
- Sends \$46 million to the Chicago Transit Authority.
- Funds higher education at FY05 funding levels, plus a \$3.7 million increase for community colleges, \$3.7 million increase for universities, and an \$11.7 million increase in the Monetary Award Program grant for the Illinois Student Assistance Commission (\$8 million in state funds and \$3.7 million in federal funds).
- No increases in the state income tax or sales tax and no increases in proposed cigarette or software taxes were approved.

FY06 COMMUNITY COLLEGE BUDGET

The Illinois community college system's FY 2006 budget was approved at a higher level than recommended by Gov. Rod Blagojevich in his March budget address to the General Assembly. The following components were added to the Governor's recommended budget:

- The FY06 community college budget is nearly the same as the FY 2005 budget. No changes were made to equalization funding.
- \$1.1 million is transferred from the Illinois State Board of Education to the Illinois Community College Board for administration of GED testing.
- A \$1 million increase in the P-16 initiative grant was approved.
- \$600,000 in additional initiatives were added.

- continued -



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PENSION SYSTEM CHANGES

Lawmakers approved Senate Bill 27, which makes changes to the five state-supported public pension plans. The State Universities Retirement System (SURS), Teachers Retirement System, State Employees Retirement System, Judges Retirement System and General Assembly Retirement System will receive \$2 billion less in state (employer) funded contributions in FY06 and FY07 than would have been provided before Senate Bill 27 passed. This "pension holiday" will provide only partial state funding of the pension systems. \$1.2 billion from this reduction in state funding of the pension systems will be used for the operations of state government in FY06, while the balance is planned to be used in the FY07 state budget.

SB 27 also provided for several benefit changes in order to generate savings that will reduce future pension liability. The following details the major changes for SURS beneficiaries. The Governor is expected to sign SB 27 very soon.

SURS benefits changes

- Requires a SURS member's employer to pay for the actuarial value of increased benefits because of salary earnings during the final-rate-of-earnings period in excess of 6% over the prior year's earnings. End-of-career salary increases up to 20% will continue to be counted for retirement under current contracts. Those who file retirement notices under a current contract will be able to retire under the current rules, even if the retirement carries over into a new contract. For employees who file a retirement notice under a new contract after the date the Governor signs SB 27, the actuarial value of raises that exceed 6% must be paid by the employer to SURS.
- Removes the money purchase formula as a method of calculating retirement benefits for new employees hired on or after July 1.
- Removes the SURS Board of Trustees' power to set the effective rate of interest credited to member contributions for money purchase formula retirements and gives that power to the state Comptroller. This change is effective beginning July 1.
- Creates an Advisory Commission on Pension Benefits to prepare a report to the Governor and the General Assembly by November 1. The Commission will report on all five pension systems.
- Every benefit enhancement enacted in the future must expire after 5 years unless renewed by the legislature and the governor. Every benefit enhancement enacted in the future must be fully funded.

COMMUNITY COLLEGE-RELATED BILLS ON THE GOVERNOR'S DESK

The following bills of interest to community colleges were passed by the General Assembly and either have been or will be sent to the Governor for his consideration (enactment, veto or amendatory veto).

SB 2112 / HB 1487 **Trustee & Faculty Member Appointments to ICCB** (Demuzio / McCarthy)
ICCTA Position: **SUPPORT**

Provides that beginning on July 1, 2005, one of the 11 members appointed to the Illinois Community College Board by the Governor must be a currently serving community college trustee. Additionally, requires that one of the 11 members appointed to the Illinois Community College Board by the Governor must be a faculty member at an Illinois public community college. This bill originally was an initiative of the Illinois Federation of Teachers and was amended by ICCTA to include the "trustee" requirement. (*SB 2112, which is identical to HB 1487, was one of ICCTA's priority issues during the association's May 4 Lobby Day in Springfield.*)

SB 226 Agenda / Minutes Postings on Web Site (Cullerton)

ICCTA Position: MONITOR

With respect to a public body that has a website maintained by the public body's full-time staff, requires that the public body post on the website (i) notice of any agenda of a regular meeting of the public body's governing body, (ii) notice of all meetings of the governing body, and (iii) beginning July 1, 2006, minutes of regular meetings of the governing body open to the public. Specifies how long the postings must remain on the website. Provides that failure to post on the website does not invalidate meetings or actions of the governing body.

SB 445 Use of Student's Social Security Number (Martinez / Fritchey)

ICCTA Position: MONITOR

Provides that a community college or a university may not print an individual's social security number on any card or other document required for the individual to access products or services provided by the community college.

SB 463 GED Transfer to the ICCB (Maloney)

ICCTA Position: SUPPORT

Amends the School Code and the Public Community College Act to transfers all powers and duties of the State Board of Education and State Board of Education with regard to high school equivalency testing and certificates under the School Code to the Illinois Community College Board. (*SB 463 was one of ICCTA's priority issues during the association's May 4 Lobby Day in Springfield.*)

SB 575 Additional Course Requirements for High School Graduation (del Valle / Giles)

ICCTA Position: MONITOR

Makes changes concerning the course prerequisites to receive a high school diploma. Provides for an additional year of mathematics beginning with the 2005-2006 school year. Provides for two years of writing intensive courses beginning with the 2006-2007 school year, which may be counted towards the fulfillment of other graduation requirements. Provides for an additional year of science beginning with the 2007-2008 school year. Provides for an additional year of language arts beginning with the 2008-2009 school year.

SB 1857 Review of Closed Session Minutes (Cullerton)

ICCTA Position: MONITOR

Amends the Open Meetings Act. Provides that a public body's failure to strictly comply with the requirements of the semi-annual review of closed meetings minutes does not make the minutes or verbatim recordings open to the public or available in judicial proceedings (other than those for violations of the Act) if the public body, within 60 days of the discovery of its failure, conducts the review and reports in an open meeting that the need for confidentiality remains or no longer exists.

HB 715 Student Voter Registration (Chapa LaVia)

ICCTA Position: MONITOR

Amends the Election Code. Requires public institutions of higher learning to post voter registration forms on their websites, include voter registration information and forms in Illinois student registration mailings, and provide voter registration forms at in-person student registration.

HB 1051 Teacher Scholarship Program (Mendoza)

ICCTA Position: MONITOR

Makes changes concerning Minority Teachers of Illinois scholarships with respect to exceptions to the teaching obligation requirement. Makes changes concerning the Illinois Future Teacher Corps Program with respect to the teaching obligation requirement. Makes changes concerning special education teacher scholarships with respect to eligibility, certification of applicants, and the teaching obligation requirement. Repeals the Child Development Teacher Scholarship Act.

ICCTA Action Alert

June 2, 2005

Page 4

HB 2435 Demuzio Governmental Intern Program (Demuzio)

ICCTA Position: SUPPORT

Amends the Southern Illinois University Management Act. Subject to appropriation, requires the president of the University to create the Vince Demuzio Governmental Internship Program for full-time undergraduate students. Sets forth goals for the program. Provides that participating students shall receive academic credit and be compensated financially.

HB 2515 Transfer Courses Posted on the Web (Schock)

ICCTA Position: SUPPORT

Requires the Board of Higher Education to implement and administer a statewide program, using the World Wide Web, to assist students, advisors, faculty, and administrators from public and private institutions of higher education in obtaining consistent and accurate information about transfer courses and their applicability towards degree completion by publishing course equivalency guides, academic programs, courses offered, transfer course evaluations, and degree requirements. The initiative is subject to appropriation.

HB 3724 Military Service / Higher Education (Jenish)

ICCTA Position: MONITOR

Requires public institutions of higher education to allow a currently enrolled student who is called to active military service to complete any unfinished courses at a later date at no additional charge, unless course credit has already been given or the student received a full refund upon withdrawing from the course (in which case the student's record shall reflect that the withdrawal is due to active military service). Provides that the student must be given priority over other students in re-enrolling in the course or courses.

☞ Call ICCTA at 1-800-454-2282 for legislative updates ☞

ICCTA ACTION ALERT

July 15, 2005

Governor Rod Blagojevich has approved a number of bills sent to him by the Illinois General Assembly. Under the provisions of the Illinois Constitution, the Governor may have up to 90 days to act on a bill after it is passed by the state legislature. Since the General Assembly adjourned on May 31, 2005, the Governor has until the end of August to act on bills that were passed at the end of May.

Gov. Blagojevich may exercise one of four options when acting on legislation: 1) Approve the legislation by signing the bill; 2) Veto the legislation; 3) Amendatorily veto the legislation by making recommendations for specific changes to the bill; or 4) Take no action, which allows the bill to become law without the Governor's signature.

NEW LAWS AFFECTING COMMUNITY COLLEGES

Several bills affecting community colleges have been signed into law by the Governor:

Senate Bill 2112 **Trustee & Faculty Member Appointments to ICCB** (Demuzio / McCarthy)
ICCTA Position: **SUPPORT**

Provides that beginning on July 1, 2005, one of the 11 members appointed to the Illinois Community College Board by the Governor must be a currently serving community college trustee. Additionally, requires that one of the 11 members appointed to the Illinois Community College Board by the Governor must be a faculty member at an Illinois public community college. Originally an Illinois Federation of Teachers initiative, this bill was amended by ICCTA to include the "trustee" requirement and became one of the priority issues during the association's May 4 Lobby Day in Springfield. SB 2112 is now **Public Act 94-0157**.

SB 226 **Agenda / Minutes Postings on Web Site** (Cullerton / Froehlich)
ICCTA Position: **MONITOR**

Requires a public body (including community colleges) that maintains its own website to post the following on the website:

- (1) The agenda of a regular meeting of the public body's governing body, which shall remain on the website until the conclusion of the regular meeting;
- (2) Notice of all meetings of the governing body, including the annual notice of regularly scheduled meetings. Such notice shall remain in the website until a new public notice is prepared; and
- (3) Beginning July 1, 2006, the public body shall post the minutes of a regular meeting of its governing body open to the public on the public body's website within 7 days of the approval of the minutes by the public body and shall remain on the website for at least 60 days after their initial posting. Provides that failure to post on the website does not invalidate meetings or actions of the governing body.

SB 226 is now **Public Act 94-0028**.

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SB 445 Use of Student's Social Security Number (Martinez / Fritchey)

ICCTA Position: MONITOR

Provides that a community college or a university may not print an individual's social security number on any card or other document required for the individual to access products or services provided by the community college. SB 445 is now **Public Act 94- 0026**.

SB 463 GED Transfer to ICCB (Maloney)

ICCTA Position: SUPPORT

Amends the School Code and the Public Community College Act to transfer all powers and duties of the Illinois State Board of Education with regard to high school equivalency testing and certificates under the School Code to the Illinois Community College Board. (SB 463 was one of ICCTA's priority issues during the association's May 4 Lobby Day in Springfield.) SB 463 is now **Public Act 94- 0108**.

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CONTACT YOUR CONGRESSIONAL REPRESENTATIVES DURING THE AUGUST RECESS

TO: AACC Members

FROM: George R. Boggs, President and CEO

DATE: August 3, 2005

July was a busy month for Congress as members rushed to pass major legislation before the August recess. Included in this activity was action on key higher education legislation, including reauthorization of the Higher Education Act (HEA) and appropriations for federal education programs. The House Committee on Education and the Workforce approved HEA reauthorization legislation (H.R. 609) and the Senate Health, Education, Labor and Pensions (HELP) Committee will be working during August to draft their HEA reauthorization bill. Shortly after the House passed the fiscal year (FY) 2006 Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education spending bill, the Senate Appropriations Committee approved its version of that all important legislation.

When Congress returns after Labor Day, the HEA reauthorization will be pending on the House floor and in Senate committee, and the FY 2006 Labor-HHS-ED appropriations bill will either proceed to the full Senate or directly to conference. Reauthorizations of the Carl D. Perkins Act and the Workforce Investment Act will also be on the agenda. Many of you may be meeting with your Representative(s) and/or Senators this month during the Congressional recess. For those of you with no such plans, it may not be too late to schedule a meeting or campus visit with your member of Congress. AACC urges you to raise the points outlined below during any such meetings. If you do not meet with your member(s) of Congress during this time, please send an e-mail, fax a letter, or call their offices. This is a crucial time for the community college legislative agenda, and we will be able to achieve our objectives only if you make your voices heard.

If you have any questions, please contact the AACC government relations staff for more information on the points outlined below. (David Baime, Vice President of Government Relations, x224, dbaime@aacc.nche.edu; Jim Hermes, Senior Legislative Associate, x216, jhermes@aacc.nche.edu; Laurie Quarles, Legislative Associate, x249, lquarles@aacc.nche.edu) Note: Where appropriate, certain points are directed to the House or Senate specifically.

APPROPRIATIONS

- **Appropriate \$250 million for the Community-Based Job Training Grants in FY 2006.** Both the House and Senate FY 2006 Labor, HHS, and Education appropriations bills include only \$125 million in funding for the second year of this program, just half the amount proposed by President Bush. Urge your member of Congress to contact the leadership of the appropriations committees to support \$250 million in funding for this important community college program, which supports the expansion of job training capacity at our

institutions for high-demand occupations. Appropriators should also be urged to reject the House's rescission of \$125 million in FY 2005 funds for this program in conference committee.

- **Maintain the House's \$50 increase in the Pell Grant maximum award.** Overall, funding for most key programs in both House and Senate appropriations bills is level with FY 2005. One major exception is the \$50 increase in the Pell Grant maximum award in the House bill, to a total of \$4,100. The Senate maintains the current maximum grant. This increase, while small, would be the first increase to the maximum Pell Grant in four years and should be retained in final appropriations legislation.

HIGHER EDUCATION ACT (HEA) REAUTHORIZATION

- **Reject the "single definition" of an institution of higher education and maintain current distinctions between non-profit and for-profit institutions.** Community colleges oppose redirecting funds currently received by their institutions to the owners of proprietary institutions. Creating a "single definition" will simply enhance corporate earnings at for-profit institutions by substituting federal funds for institutional expenditures, or by paying for activities that should be supported by school profits.

Senate – Please ask your Senator to contact the HELP Committee leadership and urge them not to include the "single definition" in their HEA reauthorization bill.

House - The "single definition" is part of H.R. 609, but amendments to limit its negative consequences were accepted during the committee mark-up process. Tell your Representative to vote AGAINST any amendment that would reverse these changes when the bill comes to the House floor.

- **Maintain anti-fraud provisions on distance education.** AACC urges Congress to repeal the "50% rule" for distance education programs and replace it with Department of Education (ED) approval (waiver) of those wishing to exceed the current 50% ceiling. Institutions that gain this approval should be reviewed periodically, and particular scrutiny should be given to institutions whose enrollments of distance education students shoot up dramatically. The new approval process by ED could be modeled after the current, highly regarded, Distance Education Demonstration Program.

Senate - Ask your Senator to contact the HELP Committee leadership and urge them to replace the 50% rule with ED approval of those wishing to exceed the 50% ceiling in their reauthorization bill.

House – H.R. 609, as approved by the committee, repeals the 50% rule without instituting any ED waiver authority. Urge your Representative to support "Repeal with Waiver" in final HEA legislation.

PERKINS ACT REAUTHORIZATION

- **Maintain separate authorization for the Tech Prep program.** Both the House and Senate have overwhelmingly passed their respective Carl D. Perkins

Act reauthorization bills, and work to reconcile the differences between the two is underway. The principal difference between the two bills is that the House legislation merges the Tech Prep program into the Basic State Grants, while the Senate bill maintains Tech Prep as a separate line item. Loss of the separate authorization for the Tech Prep program may lead to loss of those funds. Ask your Senators and Representative to support separate authorization for the Tech Prep program in the final Perkins Act reauthorization bill.

WORKFORCE INVESTMENT ACT (WIA) REAUTHORIZATION

- **Senate: Pass bipartisan WIA reauthorization legislation.** The Senate HELP Committee has approved a bipartisan WIA reauthorization bill (S. 1021), but the prospect of contentious floor amendments is diminishing the likelihood that the legislation will reach the Senate floor this year. Both the House and Senate WIA reauthorization bills include positive changes for community colleges, including favorable authorization language for the Community Based Job Training Grants, but the Senate must act before this reauthorization can be completed. Please urge your Senator to support passage of bipartisan WIA legislation.

ICCTA ACTION ALERT

November 4, 2005

The Illinois General Assembly completed its work in the fall veto session and adjourned early Friday afternoon. Prior to adjournment, the schedule for the spring 2006 legislative was released that calls for members to return to Springfield on January 11, 2006. The schedule also announces plans for an April 7, 2006 adjournment which is about seven weeks earlier than the constitutional deadline of May 31.



The 2006 spring session calendar presents a new and challenging dynamic to the legislative process. Not only does the compacted schedule call for earlier than expected deadlines for the various parts of the session, but legislation will first be processed through a Rules Committee to determine the emergency nature of a legislative proposal. Additionally, house members have already been informed that each member will be limited to advancing no more than three bills.

Many associations and organizations are finding that scheduling adjustments in the year 2006 must be made to meet the requirements of the 2006 legislative calendar. For example, ICCTA will not be able to hold its annual lobby day as it is currently scheduled on May 3, 2006.

Issues of interest to community colleges were addressed during the six day fall veto session, but none of the issues were passed.

Ethics

Ethics reform legislation was passed out of the House but was not called in the Senate for consideration. Senate Bill 1879 includes provisions impacting higher education in the areas of naming rights for buildings and procurement. Many higher education concerns have been satisfactorily resolved in the legislation that passed out of the House. This legislation can again be advanced beginning in January 2006.

Pension Reform

Numerous bills have been filed and continue to be filed that address many of the issues that grew out of the passage of Pension Reform last spring. The legislative proposals addresses the unintended consequences of a 6% limitation on earnings increases that was put in place for the calculation of pension benefits.

Community College Study

House Joint Resolution 24, which calls for a comprehensive study of the community college system, was not advanced through the Senate. The resolution has already passed out of the House.

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House Joint Resolution 24, which calls for a comprehensive study of the community college system, was not advanced through the Senate. The resolution has already passed out of the House.



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