October 21, 2019

Legislative UPDATE
Pennsylvania's State System of Higher Education

Our universities have been committed to student success from the start. That's 2,167 years of collective history. Striving to be better every day.

Pennsylvania's State System of Higher Education advanced its redesign efforts last Thursday as its Board of Governors approved historic budgetary and policy measures aimed at increasing collaboration, transparency, and cost-efficiencies among its 14 universities.

The Board authorized the Chancellor to seek each year for the next five years a line item appropriation from the state Legislature up to a 5-year total of $100 million. The non-recurring funds would be used to create enhanced online learning opportunities; transform information technology including student information services; and a new consortium of shared services to support the System Redesign effort.

The State System will make its investment request through the annual state budgeting process by sending its request to the Governor. The non-recurring investment funding complements a request of $487 million.
– also approved Thursday by the Board – to the General Assembly for the 2020-21 academic year, which would be used for education and general appropriations across the System.

Stay tuned in the coming months to find out how you can raise your voice in support of the System's transformation.

For an explanatory video about System Redesign, view here.

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**Senate**

**Session & Committee Activity**

[Senate Session Days] | [Watch Session Live] | [Senate Calendars] | [Senate Committee Meeting Schedule]

The Senate convenes this afternoon, October 21st, at 1:00 p.m. There are no bills of interest currently on the chamber's Floor Calendar.

Before recessing in September, students Aven Bittinger of Shippensburg University, Nicole Dunlap of Slippery Rock University, and Alex Fefolt of Indiana University of Pennsylvania were confirmed by the Senate, enabling them to participate fully in the Board of Governors' October 16-14th quarterly meeting. [Meet them...]

This week, the Public Higher Education Funding Commission meets Wednesday at 2:00 p.m. to consider PA Dept. of Education overview of higher education and review of outcomes based funding. The commission convened its organizational meeting in August at which Senate Appropriations Committee Chairman Pat Browne; House Appropriations Committee Chairman Stan Saylor; and Secretary Rivera were elected to co-chair the commission. [Read more...]

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**House of Representatives**

**Session & Committee Activity**

[House Session Days] | [Watch Session Live] | [House Calendars] | [House Committee Meeting Schedule]

The chamber convenes today at 1 p.m.
Bills of interest on this week Floor Calendar include:

- **HB 1773**: Establishes the Tuition Assistance for Active Volunteers Program through which "an active member of a volunteer fire company or EMS agency, who attends an approved institution of higher learning, would be eligible to receive tuition assistance."

- **HB 1786**: Amends Title 35 (Health & Safety), in incentives for municipal volunteers of fire companies & nonprofit emergency medical services agencies, establishing the First Responder Loan Forgiveness Program; and making editorial changes.

- **HB 1803**: Amends the PennWATCH Act, further providing for searchable budget database and for administration, to include information on each settlement paid to an individual or employee of a commonwealth agency as a result of an action taken by an employee of a commonwealth agency.

In committee activity, the House Education Committee meets to consider:

- **HB 434**: Amends the Public School Code adding a new section requiring the Department of Education to develop and implement a continuing professional education course on cultural awareness that may be used by professional educators to satisfy the continuing education requirement. Provides the department shall develop the course in a manner which provides professional educators with information and strategies which can be incorporated into instruction and general instructions with students in order to encourage students to become more culturally aware. Further provides for the contents of the course.

- **SB 456**: Amends the Private Licensed Schools Act to allow a private licensed school to establish a branch campus outside the county where the licensed school is located

The House Minority Policy Committee convened in September these hearings of interest:

- State Rep. Jennifer O’Mara hosted the Committee October 17th at Cabrini University on student debt. [Read more...](#)

- Rep. Christina Sappey hosted the Committee October 16th at the East Bradford Township Building on severe weather’s impact on infrastructure and stormwater management. [Read more...](#)

- Rep. David Delloso hosted the Committee October 3rd at the IAM AW Local Lodge on Jobs and the Labor Market. [Read more...](#)

Meanwhile, Reps. Jim Gregory and Louis Schmitt hosted the House Majority Policy Committee on October 3rd at the Sheetz Claysburg campus for the purposes of holding a roundtable discussion with local businesses, elected officials and economic development organizations. Topics discussed included workforce development, higher education, and other issues. [Read more...](#)
Bill Tracking Report

The following information is updated during legislative session weeks.

In the House:

**HB 265** (Staats): Amends The Public School Code, in preliminary provisions, for career info. & recruitment; in terms & courses of study, for commission; in vocational education, for career & technical education equipment grants; and for transfer. *Last Action*: 09-25-19 H Signed

**HB 1887** (Driscoll): Amends an act relating to the indemnification agreements between architects, engineers, and owners, contractors, subcontractors or suppliers, further providing for the act, providing for further indemnification. *Last Action*: 09-25-19 H Introduced and referred to committee on House Commerce

**HB 1894** (Boback): Amending the Public School Code, in certification of teachers, further providing for continuing professional development and for program of continuing professional education. *Last Action*: 09-30-19 H Introduced and referred to committee on House Education

**SB 439** (Regan): Amends the Enforcement Officer Disability Benefits Law, further providing for disability benefits and for definitions, and adding among others, campus police officers employed by a participating university. *Last Action*: 10-15-19 H Referred to House Judiciary.

In the Senate:

**HB 305** (Snyder): An Act providing for an inventory of State-owned assets & county-owned assets for the development of mobile broadband services in unserved areas and underserved areas of this Commonwealth & for the statewide mobile radio & microwave system. *Last Action*: 09-25-19 S Referred to Senate Appropriations.

**HB 518** (Ortitay): Amends the Private Licensed Schools Act, further providing for definitions and for license fees; and for multibranch training schools. *Last Action*: 09-25-19 S Rereferred to Senate Education

**SB 470** (Phillips-Hill): An Act providing for an inventory of State-owned assets for the development of mobile broadband services in unserved areas and underserved areas of this Commonwealth. *Last Action*: 09-25-19 S Referred to Senate Appropriations

**SB 327** (Argall): Amends the Administrative Code, in powers and duties of the Dept. of General Services and its departmental administrative and advisory boards and commissions, providing for report of State facilities owned or leased. *Last Action*: 09-25-19 S Rereferred to Senate Appropriations

**SB 905** (Browne): An Act providing for the capital budget for fiscal year 2019-2020; itemizing public
improvement projects; authorizing the incurring of debt; authorizing the use of current revenue; and making appropriations. **Last Action:** 10-17-19 S Introduced and referred to committee on Senate Appropriations

**Co-sponsorship Memos:**

**SCO1185** (Scarnati): Establishes Keystone Energy Zones and creates public-private partnerships between private entities and state-related universities to develop advanced manufacturing technologies and processes through a focus on infrastructure. **Last Action:** 09-24-19 S Filed

**SCO1187** (Williams, A.): Allows student athletes to retain their right of publicity in seeking endorsement deals. **Last Action:** 09-30-19 S Filed

**SCO1191** (Aument): Establishes the Student Loan Refinance Program. **Last Action:** 10-03-19 S Filed

**SCO1205** (Collett): Requires Pennsylvania's public agencies that serve those who are young, low-income, homeless, or incarcerated to make menstrual products available at no cost. **Last Action:** 10-07-19 S Filed

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This update is provided as a courtesy of the Office of the Chancellor as a preview of upcoming legislative activity and a review of action on legislative issues of interest to the State System. The Legislative UPDATE is distributed during legislative session weeks.

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