

ICCTA ACTION ALERT

May 11, 2007

The Illinois General Assembly completed its work for the week and adjourned the session Thursday afternoon. Both houses of the General Assembly are scheduled to return to Springfield next week. Although the session adjournment is scheduled for May 31, 2007, most observers predict that the spring session could continue well beyond that date. The dominant issues before lawmakers continue to be: 1) the Governor's proposed Gross Receipts Tax; 2) utilities issues involving Ameren and Commonwealth Edison; and 3) the FY 2008 state budget.

*On Wednesday, the Governor appeared before the Illinois House Committee of the Whole for two hours to provide testimony supporting his proposed Gross Receipts Tax on business. On Thursday afternoon, the Illinois House voted 000 - 107 to support passage of the Gross Receipts Tax. (The proposal received **no** affirmative votes.) Gov. Blagojevich has warned that failure to approve the Gross Receipts Tax or some form of it will impact state funding of programs and agencies.*

Significant legislation filed and affecting community colleges and all of higher education is advancing through both the House and the Senate:

BILLS AFFECTING COMMUNITY COLLEGES

House Bill 414 Student Housing at Community Colleges (Schock / Jacobs)

ICCTA Position: SUPPORT

Amends the Public Community College Act to permit a board of trustees to provide or contract for residential housing for students and employees at a community college campus. In the Article concerning building programs, removes dormitories from the definition of "facilities" which currently prevents community colleges from becoming involved with student housing. The bill has been amended to become allowable in community college districts comprised of eight or more counties. **HB 414 passed out of the House and is scheduled for a Senate hearing.**

HB 479 Veterans Grants Appropriations (Black / Righter)

ICCTA Position: SUPPORT

Creates the Continuing Appropriation for Military Scholarships Act to require a General Revenue Fund recommendation by the Governor in the annual budget and annual General Revenue Fund appropriations by the General Assembly sufficient to reimburse institutions of higher learning in this state for not charging students tuition and fees under the Veteran Grant program, the Illinois National Guard Grant and Naval Militia Grant program, and the MIA/POW Scholarship program. Requires an irrevocable and continuing appropriation if the General Assembly fails to make sufficient appropriations. **HB 479 passed out of the House and is held in the Senate Rules Committee.**

HB 703 ISAC MAP Grant Limitations (Miller / Harmon)

ICCTA Position: SUPPORT

Women Employed initiated this bill to provide that the Monetary Award Program grant amount must not exceed the amount that equals the average tuition and necessary fees for undergraduate students at public universities in this state for the academic year no more than 2 years prior to the academic year for which grant assistance is being requested (now the amount is \$4,968) or the amount that equals the average tuition and necessary fees for undergraduate students at public universities in this state for the academic year for which grant assistance is being requested (instead of the amount that equals 2 semesters or 3 quarters tuition and other necessary fees required generally by the institution of higher learning of all full-time undergraduate students). **HB 703 passed out the House and is on final passage in the Senate.**



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HB 720 Community College Board Quorum (Black / Demuzio)

ICCTA Position: SUPPORT

This is an ICCTA bill to amend the Public Community College Act and provide that for all meetings of a board of trustees, a quorum of members must be physically present at the location of the meeting. The bill clarifies language differences between the Open Meetings Act and the Public Community College Act. **HB 720 passed out the House and is on final passage in the Senate.**

HB 721 Community College Board Meeting Schedules (Black / Demuzio)

ICCTA Position: SUPPORT

This is another ICCTA bill that amends the Public Community College Act to provide that public notice of the schedule of regular meetings of a board of trustees for the next calendar year, as set at the organizational meeting of the board of trustees, must be given at the beginning of that calendar year. The bill clarifies language differences between the Open Meetings Act and the Public Community College Act. The bill is identical to SB 401. **HB 721 passed out the House and is on final passage in the Senate.**

HB 1276 Kaskaskia College - shell bill (Granberg)

ICCTA Position: OPPOSED to the concept

This is a shell bill that adds a section concerning trustee subdistricts for Kaskaskia College. The bill contains only a caption and contains no content. **HB 1276 was held in House Rules Committee.**

HB 1348 Lincoln Land Community College Subdistricts Clarification (Hannig)

ICCTA Position: MONITOR

Amends the Public Community College Act with respect to the trustee districts in Community College District No. 526. Provides that all counties, townships, census tracts, block groups, blocks, annexations, and natural boundaries are those that appear on maps published by the United States. Permits the State Board of Elections to clarify certain boundaries. **HB 1348 passed out the House and is on final passage in the Senate.**

HB 1434 Harper College Baccalaureate Degree Pilot Program (Crespo)

ICCTA Position: MONITOR

Amends the Public Community College Act to provide that William Rainey Harper College may create a pilot baccalaureate program under which the district may establish and offer bachelor's degrees in 2 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 district identify and document unmet workforce needs, (iii) that the degree programs not require any additional funding from local taxes or the state, (iv) that the Illinois Community College Board and the Board of Higher Education approve the offering of the degree programs, and (v) that the pilot program expire 4 years after the initial offering of the degree programs, unless otherwise extended by law. **HB 1434 passed out of the House and is scheduled for a Senate hearing.**

HB 3476 General Assembly Scholarships at Community Colleges (Chapa LaVia)

ICCTA Position: SUPPORT

Provides that a General Assembly scholarship (tuition waiver) may be used at a public community college, not just a state university. Amends the State Mandates Act to require implementation without reimbursement. Effective July 1, 2007. Provides that in the case of a scholarship for a community college, the designated community college must be within the community college district where the nominee resides or the designated community college must have a reciprocal tuition agreement for in-district rates with the community college district where the nominee resides (instead of requiring the scholarship to be used at a community college located in the legislative district of the legislator making the scholarship nomination); makes related changes. Provides that if the nominee changes his or her residence to a location outside of the community college district where he or she was residing and the designated community college does not have a reciprocal tuition agreement for in-district rates with the community college district where the nominee now resides, then the nominating member may terminate the scholarship at the conclusion of the college year in which the nominee is then enrolled. **HB 3476 remains on 3rd reading in the House.**

HB 3504 Ethics Act - Local Control of Community Colleges (Granberg)

ICCTA Position: SUPPORT

This ICCTA bill amends the State Officials and Employees Ethics Act to classify community college districts as units of local government that must adopt resolutions regulating the political activities and the solicitation and acceptance of gifts by their officials and employees (now, classified as state agencies subject to the entire Act's regulation and enforcement by the Executive Ethics Commission and the Governor's Executive Inspector General). Effective immediately. The bill is identical to SB 753 (Halvorson). **HB 3504 passed out the House and is on 2nd reading in the Senate.**

Senate Bill 313 Remedial Coursework at Universities (Maloney)

ICCTA Position: SUPPORT

Amends the Board of Higher Education Act and the Higher Education Student Assistance Act. Provides that if a state university determines that a student needs remedial coursework, then the university must require that the student complete the remedial course work before pursuing his or her course of study. Provides that a student is not ineligible for Monetary Award Program consideration if (1) a state university that the student was enrolled at required that the student complete remedial coursework; (2) by subtracting the total number of semester credit hours, not to exceed 15 semester credit hours, of required remedial course work that the student successfully completed and received award payments for, the student has received less than the equivalent of 135 semester credit hours of award payments; and (3) the student began his or her post-secondary course of study during the 2007-2008 academic year. **SB 313 passed out of the Senate and is scheduled for hearing in the House.**

SB 325 Textbook Advisory Committee (Hunter / Burke)

ICCTA Position: MONITOR

Creates the Textbook Advisory Committee Act and requires a textbook advisory committee to be established in the office of the provost or chief academic officer of each public institution of higher education in this state. Specifies who must serve on the committee. Provides that a committee shall establish and implement certain policies with respect to textbooks. Provides that the committee shall include publishers. Makes changes concerning a committee's policies, including (1) providing that the requirement for disclosure of the International Standard Book Number (ISBN) is applicable so long as disclosure does not conflict with or impair the contractual rights of a private third party that operates the on-campus college bookstore on behalf of the public institution of higher education, (2) changing the exception to the prohibition on employees and departments from demanding or receiving anything of value as an inducement for the selection of a specific textbook or supplemental material for use in a course for sample copies, instructor's copies, or instructional materials, (3) allowing a policy to foster the establishment of textbook reserves so long as all materials provided adhere to applicable federal copyright laws, and (4) removing the provision providing for the encouragement of buy-back programs to expand the availability of used textbooks. Provides that the committee shall report annually to the Board of Higher Education or the Illinois Community College Board, as appropriate, on measures undertaken to reduce textbook costs and provide students with cost-saving alternatives. **SB 325 passed out of the Senate and is scheduled for hearing in the House.**

SB 326 Textbook Consumer Information Act (Hunter / Burke)

ICCTA Position: MONITOR

Creates the Textbook Consumer Information Act. Provides that when contacting prospective clients, each publisher of college textbooks shall disclose to the faculty member or, where applicable, the other entity in charge of selecting textbooks for courses taught at a public institution of higher education (i) the price at which the publisher would make the textbooks and supplementary learning materials available to a college bookstore and (ii) the history of revisions for such products. Provides that any faculty member or entity in charge of selecting textbooks for courses taught at an institution must provide a written statement to the college bookstore placing an order for textbooks detailing all textbooks and supplementary learning materials required for each course, all textbooks and supplementary learning materials suggested for each course, and the earliest edition of any required textbook that may be purchased by a student for that course. **SB 326 passed out of the Senate and is scheduled for hearing in the House.**

SB 327 No State Sales Tax on Textbooks (Hunter / Jacobsson)

ICCTA Position: Monitor

Provides that, beginning July 1, 2007, the tax with respect to textbooks required for use at state universities and public community colleges or certain other institutions of higher learning is imposed under these Acts at the rate of 1.25% (eliminating the state's portion of the tax). Authorizes the Department of Revenue to adopt rules. Amends the State Finance Act to adjust the distribution with respect to this tax. **SB 327 passed out of the Senate and is scheduled for hearing in the House.**

SB 401 Community College Board Meeting Schedules (Demuzio)

ICCTA Position: SUPPORT

This ICCTA bill amends the Public Community College Act to provide that public notice of the schedule of regular meetings of a board of trustees for the next calendar year, as set at the organizational meeting of the board of trustees, must be given at the beginning of that calendar year. The bill clarifies language differences between the Open Meetings Act and the Public Community College Act. The bill is identical to HB 721. **SB 401 passed out of the Senate and is scheduled for hearing in the House.**

SB 402 Community College Board Quorum (Black)

ICCTA Position: SUPPORT

This ICCTA bill amends the Public Community College Act to provide that for all meetings of a board of trustees, a quorum of members must be physically present at the location of the meeting. The bill clarifies language differences between the Open Meetings Act and the Public Community College Act. The bill is identical to HB 720. **SB 402 passed out of the Senate and is scheduled for hearing in the House.**

SB 420 Open Meetings Act -- E-mail or Vacation Attendance (Hultgran)

ICCTA Position: MONITOR

Amends the Open Meetings Act. Provides that the e-mail distribution of materials for the individual use of a public body's members is not a violation of the Act. With respect to public bodies with statewide jurisdiction, provides that no per diem payments shall be made to members who attend meetings by electronic means or by audio or video conference. Provides that at a meeting of a public body with less than statewide jurisdiction at which a majority of a quorum of members must be physically present, provides that a majority of the physically present members (now, a majority of the members) may allow the attendance of other members by audio or video conference for the reasons specified by the Act. Adds vacation outside the territorial limits of the jurisdiction of the public body to that list of reasons. **SB 420 passed out of the Senate and is scheduled for hearing in the House.**

SB 433 Guidance Counseling for Community College Students (Maloney)

ICCTA Position: MONITOR

Amends the Public Community College Act. Provides that the board of each community college district shall require all of its full-time students who are in their first year of attendance at the community college, including transfer students, to meet with a guidance counselor or academic advisor at the community college to discuss course selection at least once during the student's first year of attendance, preferably during the first semester of attendance. **SB 433 passed out of the Senate and is scheduled for hearing in the House.**

SB 437 State Scholars Program (Maloney)

ICCTA Position: MONITOR

Amends the Higher Education Student Assistance Act. Provides that, subject to appropriation, each State Scholar who enrolls or is enrolled in an institution of higher learning in this state shall also receive a one-time grant of \$1,000 to be applied to tuition and mandatory fees and paid directly to the institution of higher learning. Adds a provision concerning the rule-making authority of the Illinois Student Assistance Commission as it relates to the State Scholar Program. **SB 437 passed out of the Senate and is scheduled for hearing in the House.**

SB 519 College Savings Program (Clayborne)

ICCTA Position: MONITOR

Amends the State Treasurer Act. Removes the requirement that the State Treasurer adjust each account at least annually to ensure compliance with the requirements of the College Savings Pool. Provides that the Treasurer shall limit the contributions that may be made on behalf of a designated College Savings Pool beneficiary based on the limitations established by the Internal Revenue Service (now, based on an actuarial estimate of what is required to pay tuition, fees, and room and board for 5 undergraduate years at the highest cost eligible educational institution). Amends the Illinois Income Tax Act. Provides that for taxable years beginning on or after January 1, 2007, distributions from certain qualified tuition programs under the Internal Revenue Code that are administered by other states are exempt from the requirement that a distribution from an Internal Revenue Code qualified tuition program be included when determining adjusted gross income for purposes of determining base income. Requires taxpayers to add to their base income an amount equal to the amount previously deducted for deposits into a qualified tuition program if the moneys are transferred from a qualified tuition program that is administered by the state to an out-of-state program. **SB 519 passed out of the Senate and is scheduled for hearing in the House.**

SB 729 College Campuses Press Act (Garrett)

ICCTA Position: MONITOR

Creates the College Campus Press Act. Provides that all campus media produced primarily by students at a state-sponsored institution of higher learning is a public forum for expression by the student journalists and editors at the particular institution. Provides that campus media, whether campus-sponsored or noncampus-sponsored, is not subject to prior review by public officials of those institutions. Provides that collegiate student editors of campus media are responsible for determining the news, opinions, feature content, and advertising content of campus media. Provides for an exception for teaching professional standards of grammar and journalism. Prohibits a collegiate media adviser from being terminated, transferred, removed, otherwise disciplined, or retaliated against for refusing to suppress protected free expression rights of collegiate student journalists and of collegiate student editors. Allows a collegiate student or collegiate media adviser to commence a civil action to obtain appropriate injunctive and declaratory relief; provides for the awarding of attorney's fees. Distinguishes campus policy. Allows for discipline for unprotected speech. Contains a severability clause. **SB 729 passed out of the Senate and is scheduled for hearing in the House.**

SB 753 Ethics Act - Local Control of Community Colleges (Halvorson)

ICCTA Position: SUPPORT

This ICCTA bill amends the State Officials and Employees Ethics Act to classify community college districts as units of local government that must adopt resolutions regulating the political activities and the solicitation and acceptance of gifts by their officials and employees (now, classified as State agencies subject to the entire Act's regulation and enforcement by the Executive Ethics Commission and the Governor's Executive Inspector General). Effective immediately. The bill is identical to HB 3504 (Granberg). **SB 753 passed out of the Senate and is scheduled for hearing in the House.**

SB 1414 Increase in Safety Bond Authorization (Haine)

ICCTA Position: SUPPORT

This is an ICCTA bill to amend the Public Community College Act to make changes allowing a community college district to levy a tax or issue bonds for alteration or repair of physical facilities for certain health, safety, energy conservation, environmental protection, and handicapped accessibility purposes. Provides that the district may levy the tax if, among other conditions, a certified estimate of a licensed architect or engineer stating the estimated amount (instead of stating the estimated amount of not less than \$25,000) that is necessary to make alterations or repairs has been secured by the district. Provides that the district may borrow money in not to exceed the aggregate amount of \$4,500,000 during any one calendar year (instead of allowing the district to borrow money not in excess of \$4,500,000 in the aggregate at any one time). Provides that the district may borrow money if, among other conditions, a certified estimate of a licensed architect or engineer stating the estimated amount (instead of stating the estimated amount of not less than \$25,000) has been secured by the district. **SB 1414 passed out of the Senate and is scheduled for hearing in the House. (The bill may be amended to limit its application.)**

SB 1446 **“We Want To Learn English” Initiative (Sandoval)**

ICCTA Position: **MONITOR**

Amends the Public Community College Act. Permits the Illinois Community College Board to establish and administer a “We Want to Learn English Initiative” to provide resources for immigrants and refugees in this state to learn English in order to move towards becoming full members of American society. Provides that each fiscal year, the Board shall include in its budget proposal \$25,000,000 in funding for the Initiative. Provides that no less than half of the funds appropriated for the Initiative each fiscal year shall be disbursed to community-based, not-for-profit organizations, immigrant social service organizations, faith-based organizations, and on-site job training programs. **SB 1446 has passed the Senate and will be scheduled for hearing in the House.**

■ **For additional legislative updates, call ICCTA at 1-800-454-2282** ■