

***USHE Weekly Legislative Report***  
**Second Week: February 3-7, 2014**  
**By David L. Buhler, Commissioner of Higher Education**  
February 10, 2014

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This is the second weekly report for 2014 on the legislative session from the perspective of the Utah System of Higher Education, for distribution to Regents, Presidents, and Trustees.

**Overview.** Several bills began their march through the legislative process this week as standing committees got underway following the first week's focus on the base budget. Many of these bills are expected to be up for full Senate or House consideration this week.

**2014-2015 Budget.** The Higher Education Appropriations Subcommittee met twice. Commissioner Buhler introduced USHE's 2014-15 Unified Budget Request emphasizing the top three priorities: merit compensation, acute equity funding, and distinctive mission funding. His presentation is available [here](#). A summary of the USHE Budget Priorities adopted by the Board of Regents is available [here](#).

Six USHE institution presidents made presentations reinforcing the system's budget priorities: Weber State University's Chuck Wight, Utah Valley University's Matthew Holland, Snow College's Interim President Gary Carlston, Dixie State University's Stephen Nadauld, Utah State University's Stan Albrecht, and Southern Utah State University's Scott Wyatt. Each presentation highlighted the unique role and mission of their institutions while highlighting common themes related to the top priorities of the USHE budget request. Presentations from the University of Utah and Salt Lake Community College are scheduled on Tuesday (2/11).

The Subcommittee is expected to prioritize its budget requests on Thursday, February 13. Those priorities will be advanced to the Executive Appropriations Committee for further consideration as the overall state budget starts to take shape later this month.

**Capital Budget.** The Infrastructure Subcommittee heard presentations this week on several state building requests. The following presentations were made from the Board of Regent's prioritized list of capital development projects: WSU – New Science Lab Building, USU – Eastern and USU's Brigham City campus, U of U - Crocker Science Center.

**Key Legislation of Interest to USHE**

- **HB 32, College Credit for Veterans\*** by Rep. Tim Cosgrove, modifies legislation passed in the 2013 Legislative session requiring student veterans to meet with a student advisor before the award of credit. New legislation requires USHE institutions to provide written notification to student veterans of the requirement to meet with a college counselor before being eligible to transfer college credit. The bill was endorsed by the Veterans Reintegration Taskforce during the interim and was passed by the Senate Education Committee on February 5. The bill now goes to the full Senate for consideration.

Please Note:  
The annual  
**Higher Education  
Legislative Luncheon**  
will be held  
February 14 at 12 noon  
in  
the State Capitol Rotunda.

The event is sponsored by Rocky Mountain Power and Questar

All Legislators, Regents,  
Presidents, Trustees and Student  
Body Presidents are invited.  
(Please arrive by 11:30.)

- **HB 45, In-State Tuition for Military Servicemembers and Veterans** by Rep. Curt Oda, provides ability for military service members, veterans and their immediate family members to be considered a resident for in-state tuition purposes. The bill unanimously cleared the House and awaits a committee hearing in the Senate.
- **HB 72, Higher Education Grievance Procedure** by Rep. Mark Wheatley, requires the Board of Regents to enact regulations requiring all testimony pertaining to an employee grievance hearing be given under oath. The bill is currently awaiting consideration by the full House.
- **HB 92 (1<sup>st</sup> Sub), Utah Telehealth and Education Network Amendments** by Rep. Ronda Rudd Menlove, combines the functions of the Utah Education Network and the Utah Telehealth Network as well as modifies the board membership of the current Utah Education Network. The substitute bill passed the House Health and Human Services Committee and awaits consideration by the full House.
- **HB 306, Licensure Modifications\*\*** by Rep. Ryan Wilcox, modifies the requirements for obtaining licensure in landscape architecture by removing the requirement for an applicant to have a bachelor's or master's degree, or have completed supervised practical experience. Utah State University currently offers the only program in landscape architecture in the state. USU, together with the Utah Chapter of the American Society of Landscape Architects are working to oppose this legislation and are in contact with the bill sponsor. The bill is currently awaiting a committee hearing.
- **SB 16, Veterans Tuition Gap Coverage\*** by Sen. Luz Robles, provides state funded grants to qualifying military veterans who have maximized federal financial aid benefits. The bill is currently awaiting a committee hearing.
- **SB 22, Workforce Services Job Listing Amendments**, by Sen. Peter Knudson, requires all government entities advertise job openings on the state website, jobs.utah.gov. It also requires the state's Division of Purchasing to provide contact information for companies that contract with the state. USHE is currently working with the sponsor to amend this legislation to exclude job postings for USHE faculty and student-related positions. The bill is currently awaiting a committee hearing.
- **SB 34, Governance of the Utah Education and Workforce Alliance** by Sen. Howard Stephenson, establishes a multi-agency governing board for the Utah Futures and Utah Data Alliance initiatives, to be administered by the Utah Education Network. The bill requires that certain information be made available to the public and a report be made to the Education Interim Committee by August 1, 2014 determining whether all or part of the Utah Futures application should be outsourced to a private provider. The bill was heard initially by the Senate Education Committee but was held by the bill sponsor for possible amendments to address concerns related to the proposed governance and data security.
- **SB 38 (1<sup>st</sup> Sub), Snow College Concurrent Education Program\*** by Sen. Ralph Okerlund, Establishes a program that requires Snow College to provide concurrent enrollments courses via interactive video to rural school districts under direction of the Board of. The bill requires Snow College to establish a two-year schedule of course offerings via concurrent enrollment and provide advisory support to secondary school students. The substitute bill passed the Senate Education Committee and awaits consideration by the full Senate.
- **SB 151, Religious Freedom Instruction Requirements** by Sen. Stuart Reid, requires, as part of an award of a bachelor's degree, students must demonstrate reasonable understanding of the Establishment Clause and the Free Exercise Clause of the First Amendment to the U.S. Constitution, including religious freedom. The bill is currently awaiting a committee hearing.

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\* USHE has taken an official position in support; \*\* USHE has taken an official position in opposition.

For more information on legislation, committee agendas, or to view or listen to floor debates, see: <http://le.utah.gov/>