

**MINNESOTA STATE COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES
BOARD OF TRUSTEES**

Agenda Item Summary Sheet

Committee: Advancement
Board of Trustees

Date of Meeting: September 16, 2008

Agenda Item: Federal and State Updates

Proposed
Policy Change

Approvals
Required by
Policy

Other
Approvals

Monitoring

Information

Cite policy requirement, or explain why item is on the Board agenda:

Update the Board on state and federal legislative issues

Scheduled Presenter(s):

Mary Jacquart, Director of Government Relations

Outline of Key Points/Policy Issues:

Status of the 110th Congress

2009 election activity update

Retirements from state legislative and congressional membership

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MINNESOTA STATE COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES**

INFORMATION ITEM
Federal and State Updates

BACKGROUND

110th Congress Set to Adjourn September 26

No new federal funding bills are expected to pass in the last few weeks of the 110th Congress. Continuing resolutions will provide budget authority for federal agencies and programs until regular appropriations acts are enacted.

The One Hundred Eleventh United States Congress is scheduled to begin on [January 3, 2009](#). No calendar has yet been set.

Higher Education Opportunities Act (HEOA) Passed

On August 14th, President Bush signed the Higher Education Opportunities Act into law. The long-awaited reauthorization legislation totaled more than 1,100 pages and reflects bipartisan support from both the House and the Senate. New regulatory language must move through the Negotiated Rulemaking process under a new administration beginning next year. More than 60 new programs were included. While new programs have been authorized, they must now be included in the funding process and receive appropriations before implementation. Highlights of the reauthorization include language related to transparency in college tuition for consumers, maintenance of effort in higher education funding by states, in-state tuition rates for armed forces members and their spouses and dependent children, loan information disclosure, textbook costs, protection of student speech and association rights, drug and alcohol abuse prevention, diploma mill exposure (an effort spearheaded by Congresswoman McCollum, CD-4), and increased Federal Pell Grant authorizations beginning in the 2009-10 academic year through 2014-15.

Higher Education on Presidential Candidate Agendas

Higher education has seldom made its way to the top of presidential candidates' agenda. But in recent months, references have been made to access and affordability by the two major party candidates. Both candidates include references to a higher education agenda on their official platform web site.

Obama/Biden: Propose 1) a "Create the American Opportunity" tax credit, a fully refundable credit for the first \$4,000 of a college education, estimating the credit will cover two-thirds the cost of tuition at the average public college or university and make community college tuition completely free for most students. The intent is to make the tax credit available to families at the time of enrollment by using prior year's tax data to deliver the credit when tuition is due; and 2) a simplified application process for financial aid through a streamlined financial aid process that eliminates the current federal financial aid application and enables families to apply simply by

checking a box on their tax form, authorizing their tax information to be used, and eliminating the need for a separate application. Source: <http://www.barackobama.com/issues/education/>

McCain/Palin: Propose to 1) improve information for parents, 2) simplify higher education tax benefits, 3) simplify federal financial aid application, 4) improve the federal government's support for university research by eliminating earmarks, 5) expand lender-of-last resort capability of the federal student loan system and demand the highest standard of integrity for participating private lenders. Source: <http://www.johnmccain.com/Informing/News/PressReleases/ed12978d-a54f-471e-aeed-65c65bcba6da.htm>

Election Resource Guide

Under a relatively new state law, our colleges and universities have a responsibility to promote democratic values and enhance Minnesota's quality of life by developing understanding and appreciation of a free and diverse society" (Minnesota Statutes Section 135A.011). To assist our colleges and universities in complying with this law, an election resource guide is available on the Minnesota State Colleges and Universities website at www.mnscu.edu/about/legislative/electionguide/2008/index08.html.

The resource guide was created to easily assist new and returning voters in the election process and to provide campus communities with information on the upcoming election. The site provides information that explains how to register for the upcoming election, provides information on local candidates and facts about the Minnesota State Colleges and Universities system, lists election-related activities your campuses and helps users locate their polling place. Also, students, faculty and staff can find new ideas about how to promote voting this fall. There are also guidelines for hosting on-campus election-related events.

2008 Lawmaker Retirements

The Minnesota House of Representatives has 15 retirements this year:

- Rep. John Berns (R-Wayzata) 33B
- Rep. Chris DeLaForest (DFL-Andover) 49A
- Rep. Brad Finstad (R-Comfrey) 21B
- Rep. Bud Heidgerken (R-Freeport) 13A
- Rep. Scott Kranz (DFL- Blaine) 51A
- Rep. Mike Jaros (DFL-Duluth) 7B
- Rep. Frank Moe (DFL- Bemidji) 4A
- Rep. Mark Olson (R-Big Lake) 16B (*running for state Senate*)
- Rep. Dennis Ozment (R- Rosemount) 37B
- Rep. Erik Paulsen (R-Edem Prairie) 42B (*running for 3rd U.S. Congressional district*)
- Rep. Aaron Peterson (DFL-Appleton) 20A
- Rep. Connie Ruth (R- Owatonna) 26A
- Rep. Dean Simpson (R- Perham) 10B
- Rep. Kathy Tinglestad (R-Andover) 49B
- Rep. Neva Walker (DFL-Minneapolis) 61B

The Minnesota Senate will see two retirements this year:

- Sen. Dan Larson (DFL-Bloomington) 63
- Sen. Betsy Wergin (R-Princeton) 16

While congressional House members are all up for reelection, only the 3rd congressional district has an open seat this year, due to the retirement of Congressman Jim Ramstad.

2009 Legislative Session

The 2009 legislative session will convene January 6, 2009. In addition to the 2010-2011 Biennial operating budget, legislative initiatives affecting Minnesota State Colleges and Universities may come up during the 2009 session. Review of such issues is underway and may include changes to current statute, whether it's housekeeping in nature, such as fixing inconsistent language, or new policy.