



BOARD OF REGENTS

SUMMARY OF ITEM FOR ACTION, INFORMATION, OR DISCUSSION

TOPIC: Legislative Session Summary

COMMITTEE: Education Policy and Student Life

DATE OF COMMITTEE MEETING: May 12, 2015

SUMMARY: On April 13, 2015, the Maryland General Assembly concluded, with several actions having direct impact on the policies and processes of interest to the EPSL Committee. Nine bills regarding sexual misconduct were introduced, and eight of those that USM opposed, in fact failed. The one piece of legislation that passed was House Bill 571, Institutions of Higher Education – Sexual Assault – Policy and Survey, proposed by freshman Delegate Shelly Hettleman of Baltimore County. Del Hettleman worked very diligently in cooperation with representatives of the higher education community, and, in the end, USM and higher education supported the amended version of the bill. This legislation passed and requires us to: (1) perform a campus climate survey of our design every two years; (2) provide summary data on campus sexual misconduct incidents and their adjudication; and (3) pursue agreements with state rape crisis centers and local law enforcement agencies to develop cooperative processes for investigation and referral of cases.

House Bill 672 (SB 496) is legislation supported by the higher education community that permits the Maryland Higher Education Commission to enter into the State Authorization Reciprocity Agreement (SARA). SARA membership permits universities to provide on-line programs in other SARA reciprocity states without additional cost or approval from the regulatory agency within the other state. This will enable on-line programs from our institutions to enroll students who reside in other SARA states without accruing additional costs of registration or approval of the program in that state, significantly reducing the costs of on-line program administration both in terms of fees and staff resources.

House Bill 934 (SB 210), *Educational Institutions – Personal Electronic Account – Privacy Protection*, also passed during this session. The intent behind this legislation is to protect the privacy of students' non-institutional online accounts (email, social media, and the like) and to prohibit the institution from compelling a student to allow employees access to their personal electronic accounts for the purpose observing or monitoring the student's activity. The USM supported this bill with the amendments that also passed, which were aimed at assuring both that the bill did not preclude the use of social media for academic/mentoring purposes and that it did not prevent the institution's ability to investigate serious health and/or safety threats.

HB0799, *Higher Education - Veterans and Dependents Nonresident Tuition - Compliance With Federal Law*, requires each public institution of higher education in the State to comply with the Veteran's Access, Choice and Affordability Act (VACA). At the April 10, 2015 meeting, the Board of Regents approved revisions to the *USM Policy VIII-2.70—Policy on Student Classification for Admission and Tuition* to align with VACA requirements to classify as in-state for tuition purposes certain eligible veterans and their spouse or children.

ALTERNATIVE(S): This is an information item only.

FISCAL IMPACT: This is an information item only; there is no fiscal impact associated with this item.

CHANCELLOR'S RECOMMENDATION: This is an information item only.

COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION: Information Only

DATE: May 12, 2015

BOARD ACTION:

DATE:

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