

# TACRAO Legislative Issues Committee Update

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JULY 17, 2018 SUMMER MEETING

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# Federal Updates

# HEA Reauthorization

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- ❖ The Promoting Real Opportunity, Success, and Prosperity through Education Reform (PROSPER) Act was Introduced December 1, 2017.
- ❖ Advanced out of committee on December 12, 2017.
- ❖ Still waiting to get Floor vote.

Fun Fact: Elected to a two-year term, each representative serves the people of a specific congressional district by introducing bills and serving on committees, among other duties.

# HEA Reauthorization

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- ❖ CBE compliant schools would be eligible for Title IV aid.
- ❖ Eliminate all grant programs but the Pell Grant.
- ❖ Eliminate the Public Service Loan Forgiveness program, which cancels student debt after ten years for career public servants, including educators and police officers.
- ❖ Eliminate grant funding for undergrads and grad students committing to teach math and science in high-need school districts.

Fun Fact: Elected by the whole of the House of Representatives, the Speaker acts as leader of the House and combines several institutional and administrative roles.

# HEA Reauthorization

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- ❖ Remove regulations establishing minimum standards of state authorization that an institution must demonstrate to maintain Title IV eligibility.
- ❖ Prohibits the Department of Education from making new regulations concerning the definition of credit hour, gainful employment, or state authorization.
- ❖ Dictates the terms for confronting campus sexual harassment and assault.

Fun Fact: A new Congress begins at noon January 3 of each odd-numbered year following a general election, unless it designates a different day by law. A Congress lasts for two years, with each year constituting a separate session.

# HEA Reauthorization

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- ❖ Deregulates the Standards for Accreditation.
- ❖ Sets out an array of new terms for loan repayment plans, limitations on borrowing, new conditions for the return of Title IV funds upon withdrawal from school, and new conditions by which institutions and programs can earn Title IV eligibility.
- ❖ Remove regulations that require colleges to demonstrate the employability of their graduates in order to remain loan eligible.

Fun Fact: Senator Robert C. Byrd has served in the U.S. Senate for 51 years, 5 months and 26 days.

# Legislative Update

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- ❖ Bipartisan deal on DACA/DREAM Act is not about to happen.
- ❖ Post 9/11 GI Bill or Forever GI Bill signed by President Trump.
- ❖ Trump administration rescinds Obama-era guidance on race-conscious admissions that gave institutions considerable latitude to consider race as a mean to achieve campus diversity. The new race-blind policy does not have force of law, but amounts to official government view.
- ❖ Trump administration also aims to reevaluate rules that determine whether student loan debt can be discharged in bankruptcy.

Fun Facts: Roll call vote results are compiled through the Senate Legislative Information System by the Senate Bill Clerk under the direction of the Secretary of the Senate.

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# State of Texas Update

# Economic Outlook for 2018-2019

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- ❖ Legislative Budget Board (LBB) met on July 11, 2018 and received testimony from the Comptroller of Public Accounts on the financial condition of the state.
- ❖ The state's economic landscape is positive and a balance is projected to accrue in the treasury.

Fun Fact: The Legislative Budget Board is a permanent joint committee of the Texas Legislature that develops budget and policy recommendations for legislative appropriations, completes fiscal analysis for proposed legislation, and conducts evaluations and reviews to improve the efficiency and performance of state and local operations.

# Economic Outlook for 2018-2019

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- ❖ Economic growth has exceeded previous estimates due to:
  - ❖ Better than expected sales tax collections,
  - ❖ Rising oil and gas prices,
  - ❖ Job growth strong unemployment rate at or near historic lows for much of this fiscal year.

Fun Fact: The Texas Senate is composed of 31 members who serve four year terms.

# Economic Outlook for 2018-2019

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- ❖ Reductions in revenue due to supplemental appropriations:
  - ❖ Medicaid
  - ❖ Harvey related expenses (Upwards of \$1 billion) (\$2.2 billion already spent)
  - ❖ State highway fund payback
- ❖ Negative impact to the Texas economy:
  - ❖ Latter part of 2019 – revisions to NAFTA
  - ❖ Volatile oil prices

Fun Fact: The Texas House of Representatives is composed of 150 members who serve two year terms.

# November Elections

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- ❖ Governor and Lieutenant Governor
- ❖ Every seat in the Texas House of Representatives
- ❖ Approximately half the seats in the Texas Senate
- ❖ The Texas House will elect a new speaker to replace Joe Straus who is not seeking another term.
- ❖ Make up of house right now: 95 Republicans and 55 Democrats.

Fun Fact: The Legislature of the State of Texas convenes its regular sessions at noon on the second Tuesday in January in odd-numbered years.

# Interim Charges

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Interim charges are a way of highlighting issues that lawmakers will study and discuss leading up to the next legislative session:

- ❖ Competency-based and performance funding models
- ❖ Educator Prep and Certification Programs
- ❖ Transferability improvements
- ❖ Open education resources
- ❖ Dual credit course offerings

# 86<sup>th</sup> Legislative Session

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- ❖ State agencies:
  - ❖ Baseline requests for General Revenue Funds and General Revenue Dedicated Funds may not exceed the sum of amounts expended in fiscal year 2018 and budgeted in fiscal year 2019.
  - ❖ Must also submit a supplemental schedule detailing how they would reduce the baseline request by an additional 10% in 2.5% increments in General Revenue and General Revenue Dedicated Funds.

Fun Fact: The lawmaking process involves four major stages: introduction, committee action, floor action, and enrollment.

# 86<sup>th</sup> Legislative Session

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- ❖ Texas republicans met in early June and outlined the parties' legislative priorities (over 300). Listed below are a few of the more notable priorities:
  - ❖ Decriminalize possession of small amounts of marijuana
  - ❖ Opposition to the removal of Confederate monuments in Texas
  - ❖ Support of selecting the next Texas House speaker within the lower chamber's GOP caucus
  - ❖ Changes for toll roads and taxpayer-funded toll projects
  - ❖ Opposition to the requirement of personal firearm storage
  - ❖ Bathroom Bill
  - ❖ Constitutional carry
  - ❖ Abolish abortion

Fun Fact: Pre-filing of bills will begin in November.

# Resources

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- ❖ <https://Comptroller.texas.gov>
- ❖ <https://Capitol.texas.gov>
- ❖ <https://www.politics1.com/tx.htm>
- ❖ <https://www.texastribune.org>
- ❖ <https://thebestschools.org/magazine/prosper-act-good-bad-shady/>
- ❖ <https://www.senate.gov>
- ❖ <https://www.house.gov>
- ❖ <https://house.texas.gov/media/pdf/interim-charges-85th.pdf>
- ❖ [https://www.ltgov.state.tx.us/wp-content/uploads/docs/InterimCharges\\_2017\\_Round\\_1\\_FINAL.pdf](https://www.ltgov.state.tx.us/wp-content/uploads/docs/InterimCharges_2017_Round_1_FINAL.pdf)
- ❖ [https://www.ltgov.state.tx.us/wp-content/uploads/docs/InterimCharges\\_2017\\_Round\\_2\\_FINAL.pdf](https://www.ltgov.state.tx.us/wp-content/uploads/docs/InterimCharges_2017_Round_2_FINAL.pdf)

# 86<sup>th</sup> Legislative Session – Higher Education

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176 days until the 86<sup>th</sup> legislature convenes

## TACRAO Legislative Issues Committee

Bobbye Fry		University of the Incarnate Word	<a href="mailto:fry@uiwtx.edu">fry@uiwtx.edu</a>
Debbie Gilchrist	Chair-Elect	University of Texas-Rio Grande Valley	<a href="mailto:debbie.gilchrist@utrgv.edu">debbie.gilchrist@utrgv.edu</a>
Sheila Gray		Texas Tech University	<a href="mailto:sheila.gray@ttu.edu">sheila.gray@ttu.edu</a>
Chris Reed		Texas A&M University	<a href="mailto:creed@tamu.edu">creed@tamu.edu</a>
V. Shelby Stanfield	Chair	University of Texas-Austin	<a href="mailto:s.stanfield@austin.utexas.edu">s.stanfield@austin.utexas.edu</a>