Springfield Legislative Update

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Will we get a budget?

Pros:

• Legislators have made it clear they want a full-year budget
• Concerned about negative effects on bond agency ratings and threats to accreditation
• Election year
• 15 Republican representatives and one Republican senator voted for last year’s budget, most of whom are not running for reelection
Will we get a budget?

Cons:

- Rauner’s proposed budget would give NIU $81.9 million — This is our budget assumption
- We have asked for FY15 budget of roughly $91 million
- Rauner’s pension cost shift proposal is likely dead for this session
- Some discussion of a partial year budget until after the election
- Any budget outcome is likely to “kick the can” down the road

Budget possibilities

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Higher Education Atmosphere in Springfield

- Concern over “wasteful” spending by universities
- Demand for accountability
- Concern over outmigration of students and cost of college
- Calls for consolidation or closures
- Establishment of Higher Education Working Group

Investment, Performance, and Accountability Compact (IPAC)

**NIU obligations:**
- The Northern Illinois University (NIU) Board of Trustees may not increase the base rate of in-state undergraduate tuition and mandatory fees by more than the rate of inflation
- 50% of new freshmen will be from underserved populations, defined as Pell eligible, first generation, or an alum of Chicago Public Schools
- NIU will provide the equivalent of at least 20% of the state appropriation to financial aid for Illinois residents
- NIU will maintain at least a 75% first-to-second year retention rate and at least a 50% six-year graduation rate for first-time freshmen in undergraduate programs
- NIU will increase accountability to the state by providing an annual report card on key indicators, published and updated on the university website.

**State obligations:**
- Lock-in state funding commitment for 5 years
- Reinstatement Certificate of Participation program
- Create Illinois Excellence Fund
NIU’s legislative priorities

- Predictable, adequate, and stable funding in return for a commitment to accountability
- Flexibility to operate in an efficient manner
  - State University Civil Service System reform
  - Procurement reform
- Capital renewal funding

Bills to watch

- University Surplus Real Estate (SB3288)
- Higher Ed Performance Metrics (HB4991)
- 3-year Teacher Licensure (HB4956)
- Community College 4-year Nursing Degree (SB888)
- Higher Education Centers of Excellence (SB2234/HB4103)
Among other things, the bill would:

- Create a uniform admission application to be accepted at all public universities in Illinois.
- Provide automatic admission to an academically appropriate public university for any high school student with a grade of B or better average if they maintain their B average through graduation.
- Automatically refer any student who is not offered admission to a public university to the community college district where they live and provide the student with enrollment information.
- Require that a student who is accepted to a public institution of higher education receive an acceptance letter from that institution setting forth any grants or scholarship offers extended by the institution at that time.
- Study the opportunity for merit-based financial aid.
- Study the concept of multi-year budgeting and report specific recommendations to the General Assembly no later than January 1, 2019.

Higher Education Centers of Excellence (“Brady/Rose”)

The bill empowers the IBHE to:

- Conduct a study ranking the quality of academic departments to corresponding other departments at other public universities and campuses in Illinois.
- Produce a statement of excellence for each campus.
- Institute an economic efficiency review of each campus and the top eight ranked academic departments statewide.
Enhancing NIU’s Springfield presence

- Replacing our contract lobbyist with a Springfield-based state legislative liaison
- Establishment of an Alumni Advocacy program
- Creation of the NIU Caucus

Inaugural NIU Caucus Members

Legislators:
- Rep. Steve Andersson
- Rep. Kelly Burke
- Rep. Tim Butler
- Sen. Cristina Castro (co-chair)
- Sen. John Curran
- Rep. Linda Chapa LaVia
- Rep. Tom Demmer
- Rep. Mike Fortner
- Sen. Tia Hutchinson
- Rep. Stephanie Kifowit
- Rep. Anna Moeller
- Rep. Bob Pritchard
- Sen. Tom Rooney
- Rep. Carol Sente
- Rep. Joe Sosnowski (co-chair)
- Sen. Dave Syverson
- Rep. Litesa Wallace
- Rep. Grant Wehrli

Staff:
- Mark Bonne (Sen. Stadelman)
- James Mendez (Illinois State Senate Democratic Caucus)
- Kayla Soenssen (Sen. Bertino-Tarrant)
- Miles Sodowski (Illinois State Senate Democratic Caucus)

*Alumnus