Welcome
Under the Dome provides a review of the recent issues being considered by the 83rd Legislature during its Second Session and provides information on issues under consideration that affect WVU and higher education.

Campus Carry
House Bill 4298 was introduced this week by several members of the House of Delegates. It would prohibit our Board of Governors, except in three defined instances, from banning individuals with a concealed weapon permit from carrying a concealed weapon on our campuses or in our buildings. We note that current law authorizes the Board of Governors and administration to make those decisions.

Under the proposed legislation, the only instances in which the Board of Governors could prohibit concealed weapons on campus would be in: (1) a stadium or arena with a capacity of more than 5,000 spectators; (2) a daycare facility located on the property of the State institution of higher education; or (3) in the secure area of any building used by a law enforcement agency on the property of the state institution for higher education.

University leadership believes that this legislation may begin to move through the committee process soon and is engaged in taking appropriate measures in the best interest of the institution.

We have several concerns about House Bill 4298 and we believe that the decision on these issues pertaining to our WVU System campuses should reside with our Board of Governors. Our university government relations team is engaged with the Legislature on this issue and will continue to advocate for the best interests of the University.

However, we also are aware that there are some (including in the Legislature) who believe we should be a “campus carry” state. We wanted to alert faculty and staff of the pending legislation. Here is a link to the legislation. wvlegislature.gov/Bill_Status/bills_text.cfm?billdoc=hb4298%20intr.htm&yr=2018&sesstype=RS&i=4298

Also, here is the link to the main legislative webpage for those who have an interest in contacting members of the Legislature regarding this legislation. wvlegislature.gov

Bill Tracking
Here are some of the bills introduced so far in the House of Delegates and the State Senate that relate to WVU and higher education.

SJR 9 (HJR 106) – Just Cut Taxes and Win Amendment
SB 83 – Relating to Higher Education Student Success
SB111 – Enacting Forming Open and Robust University Minds Act
SB 152 (HB 4019) – Budget Bill
SB 269 (HB 4154) – Establishing 2018 Regulatory Reform Package
SB 284 (HB 4267) – Increasing Access to Career Education and Workforce Training
SB 287 (HB 4170) – Creating and Maintaining Centralized State Vehicle Inventory System
SB 330 – Relating to Exemptions from Mandated Immunizations
SB 340 – Relating to Employer-Employee Cost-Sharing Ratio of Premiums for PEIA Active Members
HB 2335 – Protecting Academic Freedom in Higher Education
HB 2887 – Relating to Retirement and Separation Incentives
HB 3001 – Abolishing the West Virginia Higher Education Policy Commission
HB 3045 – Modifying the Tax on Soft Drinks to Only Cover Sugary Drinks
HB 4203 – Campus Free Speech Act

To review bills that have been introduced, please visit this link. wvlegislature.gov/Bill_Status/bill_status.cfm

State of the State Address
On January 10, Governor Justice delivered his second State of the State Address.

West Virginia University was mentioned prominently in a few places of the speech. The Governor highlighted the fact that the State’s budget situation has improved dramatically compared to last year (NOTE: The appropriation for WVU for this year was increased by approximately $900,000 over last year, instead of a reduction).

The Governor focused on many key areas: the need to develop a long-term strategy for increasing K-12 educator compensation; the need to increase workforce participation rates in our state by making community college more affordable; and taking steps to address the opioid crisis (including a specific reference to West Virginia University). He also mentioned the need to increase the state’s agriculture economy and the need to continue to address the state’s business climate, and in particular the personal property tax on industrial machinery, equipment and inventory.

Many of these initiatives are consistent with the efforts of the West Virginia Forward project.


To track the Governor’s legislative package and see the status of other bills signed or vetoed by the Governor, please visit governor.wv.gov/legislation/Pages/default.aspx.

For questions or more information, contact Travis Mollohan, director, State and Local Relations, email: tmolloh1@mail.wvu.edu; phone: 304-400-4963

WVU is an EEO/Affirmative Action Employer. Under-represented class members are encouraged to apply. This includes minorities, females, individuals with disabilities and veterans.
New Members and Appointments
On January 11, Governor Justice appointed Jeffrey M. Pack of Raleigh County to the House of Delegates to replace John O’Neal, who accepted a position as Legislative Liaison for the Governor’s Office.

Governor Justice also recently appointed Delegate Karen Lynne Arvon to the State Senate, following the resignation of Senator Jeff Mullins. Senator Arvon becomes the fourth Republican woman to serve in the State Senate, and the 9th District becomes the first senatorial district in the state’s history to be represented by two women. The Governor will appoint a replacement to Senator Arvon in the House in the near future.

Legislative Calendar and Important Dates
Monongalia County Day at the Capitol January 30, 2018
Last Day to Introduce Bills in the House February 13, 2018
Last Day to Introduce Bills in the Senate February 19, 2018
WVU and WVU Extension Day at the Capitol February 20, 2018
Bills Due Out of Committee in Chamber of Origin February 25, 2018
Last Day to Consider a Bill on Third Reading February 28, 2018
Last Day of Regular Session March 10, 2018

WVU at the State Capitol
Travis Mollohan and Rocco Fucillo, both from WVU’s State and Local Relations team, represent WVU at the State Capitol during the legislative session. They can answer questions about any issues addressed by the Legislature. Contact info: Travis Mollohan (tmolloh1@mail.wvu.edu) or Rocco Fucillo (rsfucillo@mail.wvu.edu).

More Information
To learn more about the Legislature, including district maps, bill tracking, committee assignments and a summary of legislative activities, please visit wvlegislature.gov. You may also find contact information for your legislators on that website.

To learn more about WVU’s legislative initiatives, please visit governmentrelations.wvu.edu.

For questions or more information, contact Travis Mollohan, director, State and Local Relations, email: tmolloh1@mail.wvu.edu; phone: 304-400-4963

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