



LEGISLATIVE NEWSLETTER

February 23, 2018

JOINT COUNCILS OF USM GET ACTIVE IN ANNAPOLIS

With the generous support of the USM Foundation, more than 40 individuals representing the Council of University System Staff, Council of University System Faculty, and the USM Student Council made the rounds with legislators in Annapolis on Wednesday. The groups were recognized in the Senate and House Chambers by Prince George's County Senator Jim Rosapepe and Delegate Barbara Frush, and spent the morning and afternoon fanned out across the capital complex to share the message of the value of their respective and vital roles. Chancellor Caret addressed the group during lunch and the Senator and Delegate greeted council members in each respective chamber with this message:

“Mr. President, I am honored to recognize the University System of Maryland, Council of University System Staff, the USM Council of University System Faculty, the USM Student Council and the USM Foundation. This is the third time that these Councils and the Foundation have come together to advocate for public higher education. As an advisory council to the Board of Regents and to the Chancellor, these members represent the academic professionals, technically skilled and managerial group employees, and students – all of whom are so vital to the System.

The Councils are part of the USM shared governance group. They are committed to representing concerns by actively participating on all levels within and beyond the USM. The Councils strive to foster respect, communication, and collaboration within the University community.

Council members work diligently to engender a sense of university community and cultivate an ideal environment for teaching, learning and service. The USM Foundation offers grants administration, gift administration, payroll services, investment management, in addition to campaign and strategic fundraising support and professional development.”

COMPUTER SCIENCE AND CYBER SECURITY AT HBI'S REVIEWED

On Wednesday in Senate Education, Health & Environmental Affairs Committee the USM testified on a bill that establishes the Cyber Warrior Diversity Program (CWDP) at Coppin State University (CSU) and Morgan State University (MSU) to train students in computer networking and cybersecurity, including training to achieve specified CompTIA (Computing Technology Industry Association) certifications. Further, for fiscal year 2020, and each fiscal year thereafter, the Governor must include a general fund appropriation in the state budget equal to the amount that CSU and MSU estimate to spend on the program each fiscal year.

The institutions that comprise the USM support and deliver a myriad of “cybersecurity” degree programs at every level – including CSU’s Cyber Warrior Diversity Program. Over the past three years, 10,000 degrees in programs related to cybersecurity from 22 cybersecurity offerings at USM have been produced. The bill, in its original form, would preclude hundreds of computer science certificate and degree programs – to the benefit of the two institutions – would have powerful negative effect on the strides Maryland has made in this burgeoning field. However, the USM is working with the bill’s sponsor on amendments that expand the number of eligible institutions and deletes a paragraph that would have narrowed, dramatically, the number of institutions able to provide cybersecurity academic programming.

BILL SEEKS TO EXPAND TEACHER ACADEMIES ACROSS MARYLAND

Yesterday, in House Ways and Means Committee, the USM offered testimony in favor of House Bill 823. This bill requires county boards of education to offer a Teacher Academy of Maryland (TAM) Program and authorizes county boards to partner with neighboring counties. The bill also requires that the State Department of Education (MSDE) develop a digital recruitment platform aimed at encouraging individuals to enter the teaching profession.

House Bill 823 addresses expanding access to the Teacher Academies of Maryland (TAM) to students in all counties in the state. The TAMs are a creative and unique approach to taking the “long view” of building a pipeline of highly qualified teachers in Maryland. The digital recruitment platform is aimed at encouraging individuals to enter the teaching profession. A state-run platform, it would guide interested candidates with a few “clicks” to educator preparation programs in Maryland. The USM believes this would be a welcome recruiting tool for all the education programs in the state.

The bill also addresses an issue that has been frustrating the teacher education programs for many years. It is surprisingly difficult to get reliable data in the form of “dashboards” to determine exactly how many of the Maryland certified teachers who are prepared in Maryland higher education institutions teach in Maryland schools. System officials

would be very interested in knowing how many stay in the state, and how many stay in the profession. The proposal to have MSDE and MHEC collaborate, hopefully with the MLDS to collect and analyzed these data is welcomed by the USM educator preparation programs.

UNIVERSITY SYSTEM SEEKS PROCUREMENT PARITY

Yesterday in the House Health and Government Operations Committee the USM testified on House Bill 1237. The bill alters a provision of the State Finance and Procurement Article to remove the requirement that the USM, as well as Morgan State University and St. Mary's College of Maryland, submit dispositions of personal property for review and approval by the Board of Public Works.

These statutory changes allow the USM to dispose of personal property consistent with Board of Regents Policy on Disposal of Surplus Personal Property. The Board of Regents has delegated to the presidents of our institutions, or their designee, the ability to declare personal property surplus if it is no longer necessary for the efficient operation of the institution. The policy further requires the disposal of surplus property in one of six authorized manners: 1) by trading it; 2) by auctioning it; 3) by selling it in a manner that fosters competition; 4) by transferring it; 5) by dismantling it for recovery of parts; or 6) if no value can be realized, by destroying it.

These changes are technical in nature and ensure the same authority as USM's sister institutions in the Education Article. The changes to the State Finance and Procurement Article remove the ambiguity that Morgan and St. Mary's also have the authority to dispose of personal property without Board of Public Works approval.

BILL CONCERNING CAMPUS SPEECH HEARD IN SENATE COMMITTEE

On Wednesday in Senate Education, Health & Environmental Affairs Committee the USM opposed Senate Bill 525. The bill would require a public institution of higher education, upon gaining knowledge of an act of discriminatory harassment, to take immediate action to eliminate the act of discriminatory harassment and address the effects of discriminatory harassment. Discriminatory harassment is defined as student-on-student speech that is unwelcome and so severe it undermines and detracts from the educational experience. The bill also allows an individual to bring suit against an institution of higher education for at least \$1,000 in addition to compensatory damages, court costs and attorney fees if an institution is found to be "deliberately indifferent" to an act of discriminatory harassment.

The USM testified that colleges and universities are places where reasonable debate should thrive and a diversity of views tolerated. Verbal threats and harassment have no place on a college campus or at any educational institution. The Board of Regents, Chancellor Caret and, most importantly, the USM presidents have made it clear that efforts to eliminate discriminatory acts of all degrees, on-campus or off-campus, remain a

critical priority. The USM believes that existing student conduct codes address egregious acts while preserving the right and ability for free expression.

Each campus has a unique mission, demographic and geography. USM testimony made clear that Senate Bill 525 overlooks the need for continuous dialogue, the reinforcement of positive messages, and the recognition that changing campus climate is a process.