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Arizona Board of Regents Votes to Support Governor's Budget, Legislation Affecting Universities

(Phoenix, Ariz.) – During a special meeting today, the Arizona Board of Regents reiterated its budget priority for the resident student funding model and support of the governor's budget proposal, including funding for the Arizona Teachers Academy and ensuring that student funds are not used to subsidize the Health Insurance Trust Fund. The board also took positions on legislation affecting Arizona's public universities enterprise.

Gov. Doug Ducey's fiscal year 2020 budget calls for \$35 million in support of the Arizona resident student funding model. Currently state funds cover approximately 34 percent of a resident student's cost of education; the funding model recommends the state should ultimately cover 50 percent of a resident student's cost of education. As recently as fiscal 2008, the state funded 72 percent of resident students' educational costs.

The governor proposes \$21 million for the Arizona Teachers Academy in his budget, an innovative teacher education program available at all of the universities that covers students' costs associated with their program through a year-for-year tuition scholarship for academy graduates who agree to teach in Arizona public schools.

"We appreciate Gov. Ducey's support of the resident student funding model and the Arizona Teachers Academy. Dedicated funding for the academy will allow the universities to expand this innovative program that provides quality teachers for our state's classrooms during an era when we need it the most," said Ron Shoopman, Arizona Board of Regents chair. "Every student in our K-12 schools deserves to have great teachers in their classrooms."

Arizona's public universities are the largest providers of the teaching workforce in Arizona, educating thousands of teachers through quality teacher preparation programs. With this new funding proposed in the governor's budget, up to 3,000 students could potentially graduate from the Arizona Teachers Academy and teach in Arizona. Key to the success of the academy is a dedicated funding source from the state to bring more teachers to Arizona's classrooms and address a critical teacher shortage.

The board voted to support the following legislation: [SB 1354](#) – Graduate medical education; appropriation [SB 1468](#) – Schools; suicide prevention training; and [SB 1029](#) – Qualifying physicians; opiate-dependent patients. The board voted to oppose [SB 1285](#) – Construction contracts; public works; payments; and changed its stance from opposition to a neutral position on [HB 2303](#) – Computer science; credit; mathematics; science.

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