

Contact: Sarah Harper, (602) 402-1341, sarah.k.harper@azregents.edu
Julie Newberg, (602) 686-1803, julie.newberg@azregents.edu

Arizona Board of Regents Votes to Support Legislation

(Tempe, Ariz.) – Today, the Arizona Board of Regents took action to support legislation affecting Arizona’s public universities enterprise. Legislation that the board voted to support:

- **HB 2061 - Foster Tuition Waiver Scholarship**
The proposed legislation would lower the eligibility ages for children who qualify for the Foster Waiver Tuition Scholarship to 14 from the current age of 16. Eligibility would also apply to youth in foster care who were adopted from foster care when they were at least 14 from the current age of 16. The board supported the bill contingent on an appropriation from the Legislature to fund the scholarships.
- **HB 2321 - Public Service Scholarship Fund**
The proposed legislation would establish the John McCain Public Service Scholarship Fund for students who complete a term of service in a national service program supported by the federal government and meet eligibility requirements for the scholarship. The board supports the bill with proposed funding from the Legislature to address the costs of the scholarship fund.
- **HB2423 - Space Flight Activities; Release Agreement**
The board took a position of support on this bill and seeks bill language that helps the universities leverage their space activities.

The board also supported an effort to introduce new legislation that would allow all new university and board employees to choose their participation in either the Arizona State Retirement System or the ABOR Optional Retirement Program. Currently, some employees automatically default into ASRS. The proposal would allow the universities the option to set direct default options for employees who don’t choose either plan, based on the best interest of the university. As universities constantly seek cost saving measures, the proposal to the retirement benefit options has the potential to provide some financial relief to university operations while maintaining their ability to attract top talent.

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