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State Session Wraps Up After Considering Record Number of Bills [1]

May 13, 2015 by Natalie Barry [2]

May 6, 2015 marked “sine die”, the final day of the 2015 state legislative session.

As you know, the legislature was split this year with the Republicans in control of the Senate and Democrats in control of the House. Almost 700 bills were introduced, which is a record number over the past five years. The State Relations team actively worked on and tracked many bills of interest to CU and University of Colorado Health stakeholders. Major legislative topics this year included higher education funding, tuition classification, capital construction, veterans affairs, health care and job creation. We also worked closely with VP Saliman on higher education funding and budget priorities.

Thank you to everyone at CU who helped provide information about bills, testified before committees and engaged with legislators. Your efforts helped make this a successful session for CU and we appreciate your advocacy. We would particularly like to thank the Regents, President Benson and Campus Leadership who engaged in key legislative contacts and lobbied for CU this session.

CU also initiated several bills which are on their way to the Governor for signature. They are highlighted below.

CU Initiated Legislation:

- HB 15-1295, "Electrical and Plumbing Inspections by CU" (Melton & Priola/Holbert)

  The bill will allow CU Denver to continue self-inspecting its plumbing and electrical work at the CU Anschutz Medical campus and on a limited number of buildings downtown as it has done since 1991. Codification is required to continue the practice, as it was last year for CU Boulder and Colorado State University-Fort Collins (HB 14-1387), and also provides more efficiency and cost savings to the campuses and affiliated hospitals.

- HB 15-1373, "Provisional Speech-Language Pathology Certificate" (Singer/Aguilar)

  The bill allows aspiring speech-language pathologists to apply for a provisional certification to practice in medical settings that bill Medicare, under supervision, after graduation but before completing a clinical fellowship. This fix will make it easier for CU-Boulder graduates to remain in Colorado and work in medical settings that bill Medicare during the transition period between clinical fellowship and becoming an independent provider of speech-language pathology clinical services.

- HB 15-1366 "Expand Job Growth Tax Credit For Higher Ed Project" (Pabon &

Willett/Balmer)

The bill enhances and amplifies efforts to link academia and private industry by expanding the Job Growth Incentive Tax Credit to companies that operate under a “qualified partnership” with an institution of higher education. The company must create at least five new quality jobs; align with or further the academic mission of the institution; utilize the intellectual property, the body of academic knowledge and expert skills and generate positive benefits for the community and the local economy.

While we have highlighted our CU initiated bills, we also played a critical role in lobbying for and against numerous other legislative items impacting the University. Please visit our website [3] for a comprehensive report.

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