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# APRIL/MAY 2017

## REGION III

# PUBLIC POLICY UPDATES

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### 1. FEDERAL UPDATES

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- In April, Secretary DeVos announced the hiring of 9 senior staff members. One of the most controversial was the appointment of Candice Jackson, a staunch anti-Clinton lawyer, as deputy assistant secretary in the Office of Civil Rights (OCR). Anti-oppression activists argue that Jackson knows little regarding civil rights work, and have expressed concerns for what this means for the future of OCR and sexual assault intervention on campus. More information can be found [here](#).
- In April, DeVos withdrew a number of policy memos issues by the Obama administration regarding borrower protection and lender accountability. More information can be found [here](#).
- [US H.R.1824 – Responsibility Addressing the Marijuana Policy Gap Act of 2017](#) was introduced to amend the Controlled Substances Act. The proposed legislation affects the Higher Education Act (HEA), by through sec. 303 “Fair Access to Education” in which the HEA is amended to ensure eligibility to financial assistance in the case of a convicted misdemeanor offense of marijuana possession.
- [US S. 856](#)—A bill to amend the Higher Education Act of 1965 and the Jeanne Clery Disclosure of Campus Security Policy and Campus Crime Statistics Act to combat campus sexual assault, and for other purposes.

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### 2. TITLE IX UPDATES

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- During this legislative session, 16 states have introduced “bathroom bills,” with bills having failed to pass in SD, WY, and TN.
- The latest version of the Campus Accountability Act legislation was referred to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor and Pensions on April 5.

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### 3. FINANCIAL AID

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- [US H.R. 2084—To improve the Federal Pell Grant program, and for other purposes](#). Congress passed a bipartisan budget to restore the summer Pell Grant, part of the larger federal Pell Grant financial aid program, which was originally repealed in 2011. The deal extends the federal Pell Grant program, providing financial aid to students over summer sessions. Summer Pell Grants will be available in the 2017-18 academic year.
- President Trump’s 2018 budget includes a 13.5 percent cut in The Education Department, including the elimination of the Public Service Loan Forgiveness Program, a pull back on the federal role in subsidizing student loans and consolidate repayment plans now available into

one plan.

- In late May, the Federal Student Aid Office’s chief operating officer, James Runcie, resigned days before he was to testify before the House oversight committee. The full story can be found [here](#).

#### 4. STATE UPDATES

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In the past few months, there were 11 states considering 18 pieces of anti-sanctuary legislation that would affect college campuses. 6 states have introduced sanctuary legislation that extends to college campuses. Of this legislation, 5 pieces (all in MS) have failed, and 19 are pending, with 3, NJ, CA, and IN having passed the 2nd chamber. IN SB 423 has passed the House, and the Senate concurred in house amendments on 04/11/2017. TN HB 271 has been deferred from the state government subcommittee calendar to the first calendar of 2018 on 04/12/2017. TX SB 4 was considered in a public hearing in the house on 04/12/2017.

Around 14 states are considering legislation concerning guns on campus. We see recent movement in OK, CA, GA, SC, and AR. SC H 3930 was read and considered for the first time in the senate on 04/11/2017.

Alabama	No updates provided.
Florida	Florida updates can be found on the following website: <a href="https://www.flsenate.gov/Session/Bill/2017/00002">https://www.flsenate.gov/Session/Bill/2017/00002</a>
Georgia	No updates provided.
Kentucky	No updates provided.
Louisiana	No updates provided.
Mississippi	No updates provided.
North Carolina	No updates provided. Higher Education bills proposed can be found <a href="#">online</a> .
South Carolina	No updates provided.
Tennessee	Passed free speech legislation this past month. More information <a href="#">here</a> .  TN Reconnect Act was signed by the Governor. The legislation allows for adult learners to return to postsecondary education free of charge. More information can be found <a href="#">here</a> .  Several early college bills were introduced and will roll to the next legislative session.  SB0824/HB0789 will require contested student disciplinary cases of sexual misconduct to be adjudicated by an administrative law judge in the Secretary of State’s Office.  SB0635/HB0660 passed the Senate Education, but House Education moved it to the 2018 session. The bill would allow higher education governing boards to determine the qualifications that students must possess in order to pay in-state tuition.
Texas	<b>SB18</b> has been left pending in committee as of May 17. The bill would eliminate a state rule that requires universities to use a portion of their tuition revenue to fund scholarships and grants for low-income students.
Virginia	No updates.

## 5. ANNOUNCEMENTS

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Join the Public Policy Discussion at this Summer's Region III Summer Symposium in Orlando!  
9 a.m., Friday, June 16 in Oceanic 3

If you want to get more involved in public policy at the state level, the following states have State Public Policy Directors that you can contact. Here is the listing of State Public Policy Directors in Region III:

Dr. Jody Conway	Florida - University of South Florida	jodyconway@usf.edu
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This monthly newsletter is compiled by the NASPA Region III Public Policy Representative, Dr. Heidi Leming. If you would like to send suggestions for the next newsletter, please email [heidi.leming@tbr.edu](mailto:heidi.leming@tbr.edu).