



COP Remarks on Behalf of the State University System to the Board of Higher Education

Framingham State University
January 22, 2019

Good morning, Chairman Gabrieli, Secretary Peyser, Commissioner Santiago and members of the Board of Higher Education, on behalf of the Council of Presidents, thank you for the opportunity to provide an update on the Massachusetts State University System.

I wish to begin with a thank you to the commissioner and this board, for your FY20 budget recommendations. The Governor is expected to release his annual spending plan this week, and we are hopeful your funding recommendations are included.

The CoP has developed a legislative agenda that we believe will benefit our students, strengthen our institutions, and better align our state universities with other public and private higher education institutions throughout the commonwealth. I am happy to that our segment, as well as our colleagues at UMass and the Community Colleges, worked closely on a number of legislative bills and initiatives. This morning I will highlight six bills we believe are critical to the state universities. In the interest of time, I will give you only a quick overview of the bill in my remarks, but will submit a more detailed explanation for BHE meeting minutes. Feel free to interrupt me if you would like more detail during my remarks.

1. **Act to Fund Public Higher Education Labor Contracts**, filed by Representative Jim O'Day and Senator Brendan Crighton, seeks to secure funding of public higher education collective bargaining agreements. The bill would require that the Governor recognize all incremental salary increases in bargaining agreements in his annual state spending plan submitted to the legislature. We are often criticized for raising student fees but the unfunded portion of our contracts, as well as other unfunded liabilities such as employee fringe benefits, account for 80% or more of the student fee increases. We were so pleased that the BHE in December endorsed a budget request that recognizes these collective bargaining costs within our base appropriation.
2. **An act to protect student data** will create an exemption in the Massachusetts public records laws allowing campuses to withhold personal information such as student names, telephone and cellphone numbers, email addresses, area of study and graduation date. If any of this information is listed in campus directories, we are compelled under our state's public records laws to provide that information to the requester. We contend that being required to produce such records compromises our students and serves no public interest. The bill, was filed by Representative Mike Moran and Senator Michael Moore.

3. **An Act to Ensure Tuition Equity to Massachusetts Residents**, filed by Representative Mike Moran and Senator Harriet Chandler, would amend the General Laws to allow public higher education institutions to continue to extend the in-state tuition rate to students currently qualifying for Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) status. Passage of this bill will allow qualifying DACA students in Massachusetts to be eligible for the in-state tuition rate, regardless of changes made to DACA by President Trump. Simply put, the bill would allow us to continue what we have today in that a DACA student would receive the in-state tuition benefit.
4. Late last year, a bill was passed and signed into law allowing for a \$2 surcharge on car rentals in order to create a revenue source for municipal, Massachusetts Environmental and UMass Police training and professional development grants. Unfortunately, under the law, state university and community college campus police officers are not permitted to access those training grants. The bill filled will change the general laws permitting our campus police to access to those funds.
5. Together with our colleagues from the three segments, we are pursuing bills that will recapitalize the highly successful endowment match program for public higher education foundations, DCAMM construction regulations for campus construction and changes to the MSCBA allowing for more flexibility to fund campus projects.
6. On a number of occasions over the past year, the state universities have shared with you our desire to develop clinical doctorate degree programs on our campuses due to changing licensing requirements in certain professions. Over the past decade many professions began requiring clinical doctorates, rather than Master's Degrees, for both accreditation and employment. Currently, the general laws prohibit the state universities from offering doctorate level programs, except if "in collaboration" with UMass and authorized by the University of Massachusetts Board of Trustees. IT takes two to "collaborate" and our friends at the University have not been willing partners. We respect and agree with the statutory distinction of University of Massachusetts as the Commonwealth's PhD granting institution, however, a clinical doctorate degree is fundamentally different from a PhD; State Universities offering certain clinical doctorate programs will not encroach upon the mission or Carnegie designation of UMass; allowing State Universities to offer advanced degree programs aligns with our mission; and furthermore, many of the programs we seek to offer are not offered at the University of Massachusetts.

We would ask that you consider joining us in supporting these bills.

Turning from Beacon Hill to Capitol Hill, last week representatives from the state university campuses were in Washington D.C. to meet with members of the Massachusetts Congressional Delegation. Our colleagues discussed several issues that impact public higher education in the commonwealth. The issue of most immediate concern to our campuses are the proposed Title IX regulatory changes released by the U.S. Dept. of Education in mid-November. We shared with members of the congressional delegation our serious reservations with many of the proposed changes and the impact these changes would have on our campus communities. The CoP is submitting written comment to the DOE outlining all our concerns and I ask you to join us in making our voices heard. I will forward a copy of our submission to the Commissioner. Our representative discussed issues that impact student affordability such as Pell grants, expanded work study funds, paid internships, and student debt. We also raised issues related to transportation, housing, food insecurity, and equity.

Finally, as reported during the last BHE meeting, the state universities are joining with MassBio, MassBioEd, Mass LifeSciences and Bottom line to increase internship opportunities in the life sciences. Next week, on Wednesday, January 30th, in this room, we invite you to attend a news conference with MassBio Chairman, David Lucchino, and State and local officials to kick off this partnership. It will be held in this room between 11am and noon and we would be thrilled if you are able to attend.

Thank you again for giving me this opportunity to present the state university segmental report to you this morning. I am happy to answer any questions.ⁱ

ⁱ This document may not represent the full extent of the comments made at the meeting