Spring State Legislative Report

2020

University of Illinois System
Office of Governmental Relations
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Introduction

The following report covers work conducted by the University of Illinois System’s Office of Governmental Relations (OGR) during the 2020 Illinois spring legislative session.

OGR Mission

State, federal and local support is essential to the U of I System and its efforts to provide a high-quality education, to promote economic growth and opportunity, and to produce cutting-edge research and scholarship. The mission of OGR is to support the U of I System by building and sustaining effective partnerships with state and federal government. This is achieved through advocacy of the system’s needs and interests with elected officials and policymakers in Springfield, Washington, D.C., and throughout Illinois.

The U of I System is proud to provide the state with steady, responsible leadership in good times and bad. Throughout our long partnership from the state, we have a proven track record of serving Illinois as its land-grant institution and flagship university system.

Before COVID-19 struck, the U of I System:

- Increased enrollment for the seventh straight year.
- Provided $239 million in institutional aid for students to help keep costs affordable.
- Served more than 710,000 patients at the University’s hospitals and clinics.
- Secured $992 million in research funding in FY19 alone.
- Continued leadings efforts to create the Illinois Innovation Network, which connects Illinois’ public universities, community leaders and innovation-driven enterprises together to drive economic development across the state.
- Contributed $17.5 billion to the state’s economy through spending by universities, faculty, staff and students and the increased earning power of alumni.
- Supported more than 171,000 jobs in Illinois.
- Comprised 2.2% of the Gross State Product (GSP)
As the COVID-19 pandemic unfolded, U of I System faculty and staff assisted the state by:

- Helping create epidemiological models that Gov. J.B. Pritzker cited in stay-at-home orders that have been credited with saving thousands of lives.
- Working in conjunction with the governor’s office and the Illinois Department of Public Health to roll out COVID-19 testing across the state.
- Developing a working prototype of an emergency ventilator called the Illinois RapidVent in less than a week.
- Manufacturing hand-sanitizer and personal protective equipment for healthcare professionals.
- Treating patients that have tested positive for COVIC-19 at the University of Illinois Hospital and clinics.
- Participating in NIH clinical antiviral agent trials to find effective treatments.
- Graduated 192 medical students early to meet the growing demand for healthcare workers.

Once the COVID-19 pandemic has passed, we look forward to continuing to serve the state of Illinois by:

- Building on our record enrollment and serving an even more diverse group of students than ever before.
- Continuing to increase our institutional financial aid.
- Transforming the Illinois economy through the Discovery Partners Institute and the Illinois Innovation Network, which are predicted to generate a $19 billion economic impact in the first 10 years and create 48,000 new jobs.
- Attracting top-tier faculty and researchers that will continue to serve the state in good times and bad.

However, none of this will be possible without continued partnership from the state.
Fiscal Year 2021 Budget Update

Overview
The state’s fiscal year 2021 budget reflects a continued commitment to higher education by providing the U of I System and its three universities flat funding that matches FY20. The state has recognized the importance in investing in higher education by maintaining funding despite revenue shortfalls stemming from the COVID crisis.

BUDGET AND CAPITAL BILL DETAILS

Operating Budget
- The fiscal 2021 budget will provide $622 million for general operations at our three universities. This includes:
  - $40.4 million for the University of Illinois Hospital and Health Sciences System.
  - $14.8 million for the Prairie Research Institute at Urbana-Champaign.
  - $1 million for the Institute for Policy and Civic Engagement at UIC.
  - $850,800 for Labor and Employment Relations certificate programs.
  - $654,400 for Labor and Employment Relations degree programs.
  - $673,800 for the Hispanic Center for Excellence at UIC.
  - $500,000 for Illinois Heart Rescue at UIC, a project aimed at improving cardiac arrest survival rates and reducing health disparities using data and focused training.
  - $294,800 for Dentistry at UIC.
  - $276,600 for Dixon Springs at Urbana-Champaign.
- Other state appropriated funds:
  - The UIC College of Pharmacy at Rockford will receive $500,000 from the General Professions Dedicated Fund.
  - The University of Illinois Fire Service Institute in Champaign will receive $4.4 million for operations and the Cornerstone Program, which provides training for firefighters across the state.
  - The State University Retirement System pension funding proposal for fiscal 2021 is $2 billion, an increase of $141.1 million, or 7.6 percent, from fiscal 2020. This is the required statutory funding level.

Capital Budget
- Re-appropriation of $500 million for planning and construction of the Discovery Partners Institute, a new research center in downtown Chicago, and 15 research hubs across the state, including one at each of our universities and regional campuses as part of the Illinois Innovation Network.
- Re-appropriation of $808 million for capital improvements at all three universities. This includes:
  - $121 million from older appropriations, include the Advanced Chemical Technology Building at UIC, a public safety building at UIS and an integrated bioresearch laboratory in Urbana-Champaign.
  - $98 million for a computer design research and learning center for UIC’s College of Engineering
  - $100 million for renovation of Altgeld Hall for a math, statistics and data science collaboration center at Urbana-Champaign.
• $100 million for an initiative involving quantum information sciences and technology that Urbana-Champaign is developing in partnership with University of Chicago, Argonne and FermiLab.
• $35 million for a new facility at UIS that will replace the existing library, including new spaces for teaching and academic support.
• $195.2 million for Urbana-Champaign, $146.4 million for UIC and $11.6 million for UIS to fund miscellaneous capital improvement projects.

• Re-appropriation of $150 million statewide for higher education projects such as deferred maintenance, escalation of costs and other capital improvements.
• Appropriation of $7 million in new capital funding to relocate Urbana’s Swine Research Center.
• Appropriation of $935,000 to UIC to pay back the Independent Colleges Capital Program awarded to John Marshall Law School before it merged with UIC.

Financial Aid
• Monetary Award Program statewide funding will remain at $451 million. MAP provides financial aid to support Illinois students, including thousands across the U of I System.
• AIM High appropriation of $35 million with cohort restrictions removed.
• Appropriation of $3.5 million to the Department of Veterans’ Affairs for payment of scholarships to students who are dependents of Illinois resident military personnel declared to be POW, MIA, killed, or permanently disabled.
• Scholarships for children of police and firefighters killed in the line of duty remain at $1.2 million.
• Golden Apple remains at $6.5 million; and $750,000 for the Golden Apple Accelerators Program.
• Appropriation of $150,000 to fund costs associated with providing grants to exonerated persons.
• The Minority Teacher Scholarships and Nurse Educator Loan Repayment Program remains at fiscal 2020 level of $1.9 million.
• Appropriation of $23.8 million statewide for a competitive grant program for student support services within the Community College Board for costs associated with bridge programs. The focus is on improving retention and graduation rates of low-income and minority students at community colleges and public universities.

Statewide Grant Programs
• County Board Matching remains at $10.9 million.
• Cook County Extension remains at $2.4 million.
• Department of Public Health: University of Illinois Sickle-Cell Clinic Grant remains at $483,900.
• The U of I Division of Specialized Care for Children Grant will remain at $9 million through the Illinois Department of Public Health.
• Illinois Board of Higher Education grants remain at current-year funding levels: My Credits Transfer, $183,300; P-20 Longitudinal Education Data System, $381,800; cooperative work study grants, $980,500; Quad Cities Center, $73,800; University Center of Lake County, $1.06 million; Diversifying Higher Education Faculties in Illinois, $1.46 million; Nurse Educator Fellowships, $197,400; Chicago Area Health Medical Careers Program, $1.4 million; and competitive grants for nursing Schools, $373,900.
• Grow Your Own Teachers will remain at $2.47 million.
Other

- $34,000 appropriated to the Department of Financial and Professional Regulation for costs associated with the operation of the Office of Real Estate Research at the University of Illinois.
- $65,000 to the Fire Explorer-Cadet School program through the Office of the State Fire Marshal.
- $375 million to the Department of Healthcare and Family Services-University of Illinois Hospital Services Fund.

2020 Legislative Highlights

OPERATING FUNDING, SB264
Appropriates $622 million for operations for FY21, matching state funding for the previous fiscal year

CAPITAL BILL APPROPRIATION, HB64
Appropriates $1.315 billion in capital funding

STATE GOVERNMENT EMERGENCY RESPONSE ADMINISTRATION, SB2135
The General Assembly passed a large omnibus package to allow the state to adequately address the COVID-19 pandemic. It included many different measures, but the measures impacting U of I included:

- A one-year exemption from procurement law for investment services set to expire in June of 2020 until July 1 of 2021.
- Providing greater flexibility for public bodies to conduct business remotely when in-person is not feasible due to a disaster.

AIM HIGH FIX, SB1569
The AIM High Pilot Program, which began in 2019, was designed to encourage the top academically achieving students to stay in state by awarding grants to top-performing students in a specific income range. Under the original pilot program language, when some students’ family income increased, they were no longer eligible for their AIM High scholarship. This measure contained language to clarify that students will be eligible for their AIM High scholarships for the entire four-year duration as an undergraduate student.
2020 Advocacy in Action

The 2020 Illinois Spring Legislative Session was unique this year, with work in Springfield ending in early March due to the impacts of COVID-19. Despite the shortened session, the OGR and Illinois Connection completed a wide range of activities, including federal and state campaigns to advocate for higher ed in the federal COVID-19 aid package and the state budget. A full rundown of events is below:

JANUARY

January 29 – Illinois Connection hosted its annual spring training for members of the Student Advocacy Coalition in Springfield. The spring advocacy training brings together SAC members from each university for a one-day crash course on advocacy in the state Capitol, including a tour where students learn how to navigate the Capitol so they are familiar with the building for the U of I System Day at the Capitol. (Photo 1.1)

FEBRUARY

February 6 – Illinois Connection joined the Student Advocacy Coalition to present a story-building workshop to train students at Urbana-Champaign to effectively tell their story to lawmakers.

February 11 – Illinois Connection and OGR hosted state higher ed staffers in Urbana-Champaign for a campus tour followed by an Illini basketball game. The tour included a visit the National Center for Super Computing Applications and a dinner with OGR staff and our consultants at a local restaurant before the game. (Photo 1.2)

February 18 – Illinois Connection hosted its first small-group lobby day of the session with students and faculty/staff from the UI Health School of Public Health. This group of nearly 30 students met for a lunch briefing at Innovate Springfield and then headed to the Capitol for meetings with their state legislators. (Photo 1.3)

February 18 – Illinois Connection hosted its annual legislative game-watch party in Springfield. The U of I Legislative Caucus, legislative staffers, and Illinois Connection advocates and alumni from the Springfield area were invited to attend. The event was a great way for our staff to engage and interact with legislators, legislative staff, our advocates and local alumni and to build relationships in total, nearly 100 people attended the event.

February 19 – Illinois Connection hosted a small-group lobby day with student entrepreneurs from the iVenture program. Students met with their state legislators and members of the U of I Caucus to discuss the innovation ecosystem at the U of I System and advocate for continued support by the state for DPI, IIN and the U of I System, which has helped them create their businesses. (Photo 1.4)

February 21 – Illinois Connection, in collaboration with the UIC Institute for Policy and Civic Engagement, hosted advocacy training for students at UIC, teaching them how to lobby legislators and familiarize...
them with effective strategies for advocacy. The 90-minute training brought together nearly 30 students for the lunch-and-learn session.

February 26 – Illinois Connection hosted the annual U of I System Day at the Capitol, bringing together 200 alumni and students from all three universities to advocate on behalf of the system in the state Capitol. The day began with a luncheon briefing in Springfield, where President Tim Killeen presented Deputy Gov. Jesse Ruiz with the first-ever U of I System Award for Advocacy. Advocates were also briefed on the U of I System legislative agenda and split into their meeting groups. Once in the Capitol, advocates attended a higher education rally in the Capitol Rotunda where about 10 state legislators and Treasurer Michael Frerichs addressed the crowd on the importance of the U of I System to the state and the role that advocates play in supporting the system. (Photo 1.5, 1.6, and 1.7)

February 26 – Illinois Connection hosted the first in-person meeting of the U of I System Advocacy Committee, a group of over 25 alumni and supporters with strong connections to government. The group was briefed on the U of I System’s legislative agenda and had an informal discussion with President Killeen and OGR about the system’s state and federal governmental relations strategy.

February 26 – Illinois Connection, in collaboration with the Illinois’ other public universities, hosted a higher education legislative reception at the Governor’s Mansion in Springfield. The evening reception brought over 200 alumni leaders and lawmakers together and included a program featuring remarks by President Killeen, NIU President Lisa Freeman, Deputy Gov. Jesse Ruiz and Lt. Gov. Julianna Stratton.

MARCH

March 3 – Illinois Connection planned a small-group lobby day for the UI Health School of Pediatrics. The small group was led by the UI Health government relations team. (Photo 1.8)

March 4 – Illinois Connection in partnership with UI Health hosted a legislator breakfast featuring President Killeen and UIC Vice Chancellor for Health Affairs Robert. Barish, who addressed the work UI Health is doing in the state and discussed ways the state can better support UI Health.

MAY

May 18 – Illinois Connection, in collaboration with OGR, sent all alumni, faculty/staff, student and Illinois Connection advocates in Illinois a call-to-action, asking them to email their state legislators in support of the U of I System’s FY21 budget request. Over 2,700 advocates sent nearly 5,500 emails to state legislators, including at least one email to 176 of 177 total state legislators.

May 20 – A second email was sent by Illinois Connection related to the email campaign, asking advocates to call their state legislators. The campaign generated over 100 calls to state legislators, seeking their support for the U of I System’s budget appropriation.
Events Cancelled because of COVID-19

As noted, OGR and Illinois Connection had an extensive action plan set for the spring session before the COVID-19 crisis began. Future events that were cancelled because of the pandemic include:

- 14 additional small-group lobby days
- A Prairie Research Institute dinner with the U of I Caucus.
- An Illinois Innovation Network breakfast with the U of I Caucus and IIN hub leaders.
- Illinois congressional district director visit to UIC.
- A U of I System dinner with the Black Caucus.
- A U of I System dinner with the Latino Caucus.

2020 Advocacy Photos

Photo 1.1: Student Advocacy Coalition Training

Photo 1.2: State Higher Ed Staff Tour the National Center for Supercomputing

Photo 1.3: UI Health School of Public Health Small Lobby Day

Photo 1.4: iVenture Student Entrepreneurs Small Lobby Day
Photo 1.5: U of Day at the Capitol Luncheon

Photo 1.6: U of I Day at the Capitol Rally in the Rotunda

Photo 1.7: U of I Day at the Capitol