



South Carolina Independent Colleges & Universities 2019 Primary Legislative Priorities and Quick Facts

Primary Legislative Priorities

1. South Carolina Higher Education Tuition Grants Program

Support the FY 2019-2020 budget request of the South Carolina Higher Education Tuition Grants Commission for an additional \$1.903 million for grants. If funded at the new level, the maximum student award will increase from \$3,300 to \$3,450.

2. Merit-based Scholarships

Support full funding of Palmetto Fellows, LIFE, HOPE, and Lottery Tuition Assistance scholarships to all eligible students to include both lottery and general fund appropriations (2018 = \$320 million).

3. Need-based Scholarships

Support the budget request of the Commission on Higher Education for an increase of \$1.5 million in recurring state general funds for need-based grants.

Talking Points

- Independent colleges help raise the state's per capita income and attract investment by providing sufficient in-state educational opportunities to be able to retain the best and brightest students without the capital costs of building more public dormitories and classrooms and hiring additional state employees; except for a special statutory program, independent colleges do not receive direct state appropriations
- Independent institutions provide excellent opportunities for personal choice that may not be available at public institutions (i.e. size, location, personal attention, major, financial assistance, religious affiliation, cultural preference, values-based education)
- Independent colleges award more than \$252 million in institutional scholarships each year, exceeding state financial aid by more than 3:1; private colleges are deeply invested in the success of each of their students
- If SC did not have independent higher education opportunities, many of the 21,000 in-state undergraduate students at SCICU schools would either: (a) leave South Carolina for college, (b) not attend college, or (c) attend one of our public colleges at an increased cost to tax payers of approximately \$826 per student

Background

- Tuition Grants are need-based grants available to SC residents attending a SC private non-profit college or university (AY 2017-2018 = \$39.8 million for 13,604 students) [Includes non-SCICU member Bob Jones University]
- Average Tuition Grant (AY 2017-18) = \$2,906; Average state appropriation per public college student = \$3,732; It costs the state approximately \$826 more per year to send a student to a public college (\$826 x 13,604 students = \$11.2 million in annual savings)
- Students attending independent colleges also qualify for merit scholarships (AY 2016-2017 = \$46.2 million for 9,276 students) [Includes non-SCICU member Bob Jones University]