

**Metropolitan State College of Denver
2005 Session Final Report
June 14, 2005**

2005 Session Facts

Number of bills introduced during the 2005 Legislative Session: 602

Number of bills killed by the Legislature: 200

Number of bills vetoed by the Governor: 46; 2 partial vetoes

Number of bills that became law without Governors signature: 12

Number of bills signed by the Governor: 344

State Legislative Issues

The top priority of the 2005 legislative session was TABOR reform. After many weeks of difficult negotiations, House and Senate leadership and the Governor reached a compromise. Two companion measures were referred to the November ballot, and will be referred to as Referendum C and Referendum D. By addressing some elements of the budgetary impact to the state of the TABOR act coupled with the recent economic downturn, passage of Referenda C and D will improve significantly the state's fiscal status in future years. Metro State's Board of Trustees has already voted to support these important measures, and their support has been communicated to legislative leadership, the Governor, and the campaign staff working on behalf of the measures.

Metropolitan State College of Denver reviewed over 600 bills and actively monitored 27 bills and/or resolutions. The most vital activity of the 2005 session was monitoring the state budget throughout the process, to ensure that funds to Metro State were not at risk, and to provide information at every step of the process to legislative members and staff of the Joint Budget Committee.

Metro took the lead in lobbying against proposed legislation to authorize the transfer of two state buildings on the Auraria campus from the Auraria Foundation to the University of Colorado at Denver. SB 130 (vetoed by the Governor) and SB 241 (killed in Senate Education Committee) would have allowed this transfer of state property; Metro State argued successfully that the proposal had not been fully vetted by all of the interests on the Auraria campus and that such authorization should not be granted without the support of all Auraria stakeholders.

There were several major bills related to higher education that were proposed this legislative session, most significantly SB 132 (college opportunity fund clean up bill), HB 1041 (higher education foundation reporting) and SB 85 (academic freedom). Metro State actively monitored each of them and carefully considered each revision to ensure that Metro State's interests were protected. (See Status Sheet for a complete listing of legislation tracked during the 2005 legislative session).

Other Outreach to Elected Officials

It is essential to continue building relationships with state legislators in order to educate them about the unique role of Metro State in the state's higher education system and policies/legislation of particular importance to Metro State.

This year, Metro State initiated significant efforts to reach out to legislators on an individual basis, specifically targeting new members of the Joint Budget Committee, committee chairs and freshman legislators. In addition to several events hosted by Board members, Metro State initiated individual meetings with members of the Board of Trustees and the following key legislators:

Joint Budget Committee – Sen. Tapia, chair; Sen. Keller; Sen. Owen; Rep. Hall; Rep. Buescher
Education Committee – Rep. Merrifield, chair; Rep. Paccione, vice-chair
Capital Development Committee – Rep. McFadyen, chair

Metro State also initiated meetings with Sen. Hagedorn, Rep. Judd, Rep. Todd, and Rep. Solano, each of whom have a personal connection to the college.

Metro State also arranged for the introduction of new President Steve Jordan on the floor of the House and Senate. During his visit to the capitol, Dr. Jordan also met with the Governor, House and Senate leadership, committee chairs, and other key legislators. During the final days of the legislative session, Metro State's men's and women's basketball teams were recognized on the floor of the House and Senate.

Internal Connections/Communications Materials

For use with state legislators and policy makers, we developed an information fact sheet about the college for use with legislators and policy makers. We also developed a number of materials including letters to legislators, letters to the Governor, and press releases detailing Metro State's position on the state buildings transfer legislation.

A strategic plan has also been drafted for consideration by the Board of Trustees for implementation during the 2005 interim and 2006 legislative session.

It's been a successful year, and a pleasure to work with Metro State. If you have any questions, please be in touch. We look forward to working with you in the coming weeks to devise a comprehensive plan for the interim, laying the foundation for a successful year in 2006.

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