

**SOUTH DAKOTA BOARD OF REGENTS**

**AGENDA ITEM: 3 – G (1)**  
**DATE: March 30-31, 2021**

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**SUBJECT**

**2021 Legislative Overview**

**CONTROLLING STATUTE, RULE, OR POLICY**

[BOR Policy 1:15, Section C.2 \(2.10\)](#)

**BACKGROUND / DISCUSSION**

The 2021 South Dakota Legislature ended with Veto Day on March 29, 2021. This agenda item provides a brief, high-level review of major legislative activity in the session just concluded.

**IMPACT AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

The 2021 legislative session was a very positive one for the Board of Regents’ system. After many years advocating this as a top priority, we could celebrate with others in finally securing a stable, sizeable source of funding for need-based student aid. Backed by an initial investment from First PREMIER Bank officials, Senate Bill 171 will invest \$50 million of state funds into an endowment for the new South Dakota Freedom Scholarship. Much credit goes to Gov. Noem and her staff, legislative leadership, and other business and education leaders who guided this important bill through the process. We look forward to the new scholarship funds becoming available in 2022.

This session was most unusual, with a large amount of one-time general funds uncommitted in the state’s budget. Many types of projects were considered for one-time state funding. Some of the bills involving Board of Regents’ institutions or programs were not introduced at our request, but all were worthy projects.

The Board’s top two budget priorities this session were to create the need-based scholarship endowment (SB171) and support the public/private bioprocessing initiative, involving SDSU and SD Mines research, at the Brookings research park (HB1210). A new Mineral Industry Building at SD Mines (SB156) was third in line among the Board’s top priorities. We were very pleased to see all of these move successfully through the Legislature. In addition, on the final day of the session’s main run, an additional \$500,000 was approved in the FY22 budget to support bio-research work at SDSU and SD Mines.

Two bills filed on behalf of the Board of Regents also were approved. They are:

- SB27 – Flexibility to set off-campus (online) tuition rates
- SB28 – Authorization to build SDSU wrestling practice facility addition (\$3.9 million other fund expenditure authority)

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**INFORMATIONAL ITEM**

Another successful bill this session resulted from continuing discussions over efficiency measures by the Senate Bill 55 Task Force. SB134 will limit the state's required application of green building standards from a silver standard rating to a certified rating. BOR staff testified this would save taxpayer dollars on building construction, while still ensuring efficiency and energy savings.

At a glance, these are the one-time funding requests approved for BOR-related projects:

- HB1153 – Authorize construction of a SDSU dairy research and Extension farm (\$7.5 million general funds, \$7.5 million other fund expenditure authority)
- HB1210 – Provide grant funding for new bio-products facility at Brookings research park (\$20 million general funds)
- SB156 – Authorize construction of SD Mines mineral industry building (\$19 million general funds, \$16 million other fund expenditure authority)
- SB171 – Provide for the SD Freedom Scholarship (\$50 million general funds)

## **ATTACHMENTS**

None