



### Member's Press Release

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### **Monongalia County Delegates Beach, Fleischauer, Marshall, Shook**

#### **Higher Education Governing Advances**

CHARLESTON – Members of the Monongalia County House delegation are pleased that a bill intended to modify the makeup of West Virginia University's governing board has passed the House of Delegates and is being considered by the Senate.

"The idea behind the legislation was to ensure a broader representation of the makeup of the university and our state," Delegate Barbara Fleischauer said.

As introduced, House Bill 2961 included additional faculty and staff as well as requirements to balance by gender and ethnic background, not just for WVU but for other baccalaureate institutions as well as community and technical colleges, she noted. "Hopefully the final product will include these components," Fleischauer said. "You never know what can happen during the last few days of the session."

Delegate Alex Shook said there is a lot of support for this change within the 44th District. "We were contacted by many members of the community and alumni from around the country about the Board of Governors selection process," Shook said.

Delegate Charlene Marshall said she too had received a lot of feedback from constituents.

"We the Delegates from the 44th District worked to make changes as to how the Board of Governors were selected in order to have a more diverse committee," she said. "We think this is necessary in order to include individuals from different walks of life and also to change the number of members from either staff counsel or faculty."

Delegate Bob Beach said the needs of the WVU community always ranks very high among the Monongalia County delegation's priorities.

"Working with Faculty, we realized early in the process that changes to the Board of Governors would be difficult, but careful consideration and numerous meetings by all parties involved has generated legislation that appears to address the needs and concerns of many," he said. "While HB2961 directly increases faculty members appointed to the Board of Governors, the bonus appears to be the legislation also indirectly promotes communication among faculty, administration and alumni."

The following are some provisions of the bill as it left the House of Delegates:

- \* For governing boards of baccalaureate institutions, an additional full-time faculty member with the rank of instructor or above and representing a center of excellence as designated by the institution in its institutional compact would be selected by the faculty senate.
- \* For governing board of community and technical colleges an additional full-time faculty member with the rank of instructor or above and representing a high-demand technical program would be selected by the faculty senate.
- \* At West Virginia University and Marshall, the deans of the Schools of Medicine, or their designees would serve as a member; and at WVU, an individual employed in the Extension Service would be selected by the Extension Service

employees.

Among other changes, the Governor's appointed positions would be modified in the following manner: The number of WVU Board of Governor appointees made by the Governor would be reduced from 12 to nine; at Marshall they would go from 13 to 11, and at all other institutions the number of board appointments by the governor would be reduced from nine to eight. The bill would also make corresponding reductions in the number of appointees that must be residents of the state and in the numbers of members who may not be of the same political party.

The Governor would be required to seek balance in gender and diversity in the racial and ethnic characteristics of the lay membership of each board," as well as consider certain needs and values when making the appointments. The bill is pending in the Senate Education Committee.

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