



News release
Feb. 23, 2018
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ABOR Real Estate Subcommittee Approves Charter;

Board Asserts Opposition to HB2172 in Special Board Meeting

Phoenix, Ariz. - Recommendations for policy reform of real estate management for Arizona's public university system, as well as long-term real estate strategies and oversight will be among the tasks of the Arizona Board of Regents Real Estate Subcommittee, which met for the first time yesterday and approved its committee charge.

Over the past several years, ABOR has initiated several policy reforms related to capital improvement and real-estate management. While ABOR policies provide a clear and robust protocol for reviewing and approving on-campus land development related to academic, research and other core university activities, current policy does not fully address off-campus development (e.g., ASU's Novus Innovation Corridor, UA's Tech Park at the Bridges, Phoenix Biomedical Campus, etc.) or private on-campus development (e.g., residence halls and other student service facilities contracted to private firms).

For the past several months, ABOR has been exploring ways to ensure that its policies appropriately address these activities. Last November, the board approved a real estate policy review plan and the establishment of a Real Estate Subcommittee to lead a policy review and the development of appropriate policy changes.

The subcommittee also approved a plan of work and timeline, including the review of existing policies for long-term planning and surveying other state systems for real estate asset management policies and practices.

"Management of our real estate assets is a crucial responsibility of the board and our universities," said Regent Karrin Taylor Robson, the subcommittee chair. "The development of ABOR property for research and academics is critical to advance student success, and it is a key driver of our state's economy and future workforce. I look forward to the necessary and diligent work of this subcommittee and the recommendations we will provide the board for future policy reform to ensure the long-term success of our universities."

Read [here for more information](#) about the subcommittee meeting.

Board continues strong opposition against HB2172

During a subsequent special board meeting, the board received updates on current legislation affecting universities, including HB 2172 (postsecondary institutions; possession; nonlethal weapons). At its last

meeting, the board opposed this legislation that would allow "non-lethal" forms of self-defense on a university campus. The board recently updated its policies to clarify that common personal safety devices such as certain chemical repellants and alarms are not prohibited on our campuses.

The board reiterated its strong opposition to the bill, expressing concern about the vague language of the bill which would allow NATO-defined non-lethal weapons. Members also shared concern that the voice of the public university students had not been included in the development of the bill language.

"The Arizona Legislature gives authority to the Arizona Board of Regents to set policy for campus safety and we are continuously evaluating our policies and practices to keep students safe," said Eileen Klein, ABOR president. "The uncertainty of the changes contemplated and the potential risk to students, faculty and staff far outweighs any benefit. Working in partnership with our university presidents, campus police, local law enforcement, as well as our students, we believe together we are the best team to evaluate and implement best practices to ensure safety on the campuses entrusted to our care.

"No group of individuals is more committed to the safety of our students than the board, our presidents and even our students themselves," said Regent Ron Shoopman. "We restate our strong opposition to this bill. We will work with our legislators to continue sharing our deep concern as well as that of our campus law enforcement. We encourage legislators to speak with our student leaders about their concerns and hear their opinions."

"We all want to do whatever we can to ensure student safety but I believe there are fatal flaws in this bill as it is written," said Regent Rick Myers.

The board also voted to take a neutral position on SB 1422 (universities: tuition and fees), which it previously opposed, if the following amendment is included in the bill:

- Removes the requirement that universities have to differentiate tuition between resident and nonresident online students;
- Removes the prohibition on tuition or fee revenue being used to fund or support a separate foundation or non-profit organization; and
- Adds clarification that academic fees must be approved by the board.

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