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Subject: The 2014 Gubernatorial State of the State Addresses and Higher Education

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The 2014 Gubernatorial State of the State Addresses and Higher Education

March 11, 2014

Most governors annually promulgate state policy priorities in State of the State addresses to a joint session of the legislature. Governors use these speeches as a vehicle to highlight their administration's successes, outline state policy challenges and propose solutions to advance their vision for the state.

AASCU has analyzed 41 addresses that have been given this year since January 1st to examine the extent to which governors have integrated higher education related themes into their state policy and programmatic agendas. The remaining nine addresses either have not been given or will not occur this year. Collectively, these speeches provide a portrait of the governors' plans and priorities for higher education in the states.

The following themes were most apparent in this year's gubernatorial State of the State Addresses this year:

- **Higher education continues to be an integral component of governors' state economic plans.** Similar to the last several years, higher education continues to be mentioned most frequently as instrumental in building state workforce capacity and boosting economic growth. Throughout the country, governors emphasized programs in science, technology, math and engineering (STEM) and highlighted partnerships between colleges and business and industry.
- **College affordability remains a leading public policy concern.** Through tuition freezes and additional investments in state financial aid programs and public college and university operating support, governors are seeking to keep college within reach for low- and middle-income students. In particular, governors introduced a number of proposals to allow students to pursue educational opportunities at community and technical colleges at minimal costs.
- **Career and technical education has emerged as a top gubernatorial priority.** The shortage of workers in high-skill fields has prompted governors to propose using state resources to encourage high school students and working adults to explore career opportunities in high-need, technically-oriented occupations. Governors proposed investing state monies in grant aid programs to make educational opportunities affordable in health care, manufacturing, and information technology-related careers.
- **Governors are calling for stronger alignment between K-12 and college/career readiness.** Governors continued to emphasize bridging the gap between K-12 and postsecondary education and training, especially through dual enrollment programs. State policymakers are seeking to eliminate redundancy and save students' time and money by providing credit for courses in both high school and college programs.

Higher education related topic areas from this year's addresses are shown below and ordered according to their prevalence in governors' 2014 State of the State speeches. A state-by-state accounting of higher education-related gubernatorial public policy proposals stemming from this year's addresses is provided

via the link below.

2014 State of the State Addresses and Higher Education

Compiled by **Thomas L. Harnisch**, assistant director of state relations and policy analysis, and **Emily A. Parker**, senior research and policy associate

1. **Economic and Workforce Development** (AL, AK, AZ, CA, CT, DE, FL, GA, HI, ID, IL, IN, IA, KS, LA, MD, MA, MI, MO, NH, NM, NY, OH, OK, SD, TN, UT, VT, WA, WV, WI, WY)
2. **Career/Technical Education** (AL, AK, DE, GA, HI, ID, IL, IN, IA, MD, MA, MI, OH, SD, TN, WV, WI)
3. **College Affordability/Tuition Policies** (AZ, CO, FL, GA, IL, IA, KY, MD, MA, MO, NH, RI, TN, WA, WI)
4. **Dual Enrollment/Early College** (AL, AK, CT, DE, IL, ME, MD, NM, OH, SD, TN, VT, WI)
5. **College/Career Readiness** (AL, AK, AZ, CT, GA, KY, MD, MS, NH, NJ, OK, TN, UT)
6. **State Higher Education Funding** (CO, CT, ID, IA, KS, LA, MA, NE, NH, TN, WA)
7. **State Financial Aid** (AK, CT, DE, GA, HI, IL, IA, MO, PA, WA, WI)
8. **STEM Education** (IA, MI, MO, NH, NY, UT, VT, WA, WV)
9. **University-led Research and Innovation** (AL, AZ, CA, DE, ID, IA, NM, WY)
10. **Community Colleges** (ID, IL, IA, MA, MI, MO, OH, TN)
11. **Public-Private Partnerships** (DE, GA, ID, IN, LA, MI, NM)
12. **Capital Construction/Facilities/Equipment** (MO, NM, OH, RI, SD, TN)
13. **Medical Education** (IL, IA, NM, SD, WI)
14. **Military/Veterans Education** (IL, IA, OH, WV)
15. **State Educational Attainment Goals** (ID, IL, TN, UT)
16. **Performance-based funding** (FL, MO, OH, TN)
17. **College Completion** (CT, ID, OK, TN)
18. **Adult Learners** (CT, IN, TN, WI)
19. **Remedial Education** (AK, GA, SD, TN)
20. **Student Debt** (IA, MO, NM, PA)
21. **Teacher Education** (DE, MS, WV)
22. **College Transfer** (KY, WV)
23. **Immigration** (MD, WA)
24. **Consumer Information/College Choice** (DE)
25. **College Savings** (CT)

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