State delays budget cuts

By Cyndy Cole

PHOENIX — The state will spare UA and the Arizona Health Sciences Center from further budget cuts, at least until next July.

Democratic Gov. Janet Napolitano and Republican leaders of the legislature reached the compromise yesterday.

“That’s really, really good news,” said Provost George Davis. “It’s hard to imagine that they would have put all the cuts on the state agencies right now.”

Saying that it was too late in the fiscal year for state agencies to plan for further cuts before July 1, Napolitano and legislators found a way to plug some of the deficit.

Earlier this month, Republican legislators proposed cutting the UA and the Arizona Health Sciences budget by $15.9 million. They plan to move money between accounts, delay K-12 repair projects and delay payment on a major settlement.

“Further cuts before July 1, Napolitano said that this year’s change of time and venue made the forum more accessible to students, although few were in attendance.

“I encouraged people in office to come out. I wanted them to ask the candidates tough questions,” she said.

Audience members were given the opportunity to question the feasibility and specifics of campaign plans, which ranged from increasing diversity on campus to obtaining corporate sponsorship for UA athletics.

However, a common theme throughout the forum focused on building a bridge between the UA students and administration, and uniting campus clubs and organizations.

“You all right with a meeting over lunch if it means people will be working together,” said presidential candidate Jared Mansell in regard to the state Legislature’s fault.

Students vary in views of hike

By Jeff Sklar

Students across Arizona yesterday voiced varying opinions on the appropriate size of a tuition hike, but many agreed regents and administrators must lobby lawmakers more effectively to protect the universities from future budget cuts.

Speaking at the last tuition public forum before the Arizona Board of Regents’ tuition-setting meeting yesterday, several people called for graduated tuition hikes that wouldn’t impact students as drastically as the $1,000 increase proposed by Arizona’s three university presidents.

Students, they said, shouldn’t be forced to bear such a hefty burden, because the university’s budget shortfall is the state Legislature’s fault.

Interfraternity Council President Josh Sartz said the regents that a $1,000 hike would especially burden greek students, who have to pay dues to their organizations, and asked them to spread the increase over two years.

“That would really help the students involved in co-curricular activities that have financial obligations to their organizations,” said Sartz.

Some sorority members pay more than $5,000 a year to cover room and board in the chapter’s house, as well as costs for parties and other events.

Several other students speaking over videoconference, AKEA President Doug Hatz (right) and UA Provost George Davis listen to a comment during last night’s Arizona Board of Regents budget teleconference. The conference allowed students to voice their opinions about budget proposals.

Possible tuition hike angers some students

Activists concerned with use of students’ tuition dollars

By Jeff Sklar

When a group of about 15 student activists gathered Wednesday night, they knew they opposed a tuition hike. What they didn’t know was how to be heard. Less than 24 hours later, they were presenting a list of demands to the Arizona Board of Regents.

Among them: a freeze on campus construction, the creation of a student-staffed budget oversight committee and the assurance that a hike won’t hurt teaching or research assistants.

The activists made those demands at the regents’ forum late yesterday afternoon, saying that students haven’t been adequately informed about the proposed $1,000 tuition hike.

Before and during the beginning of the forum, students, they said, shouldn’t be forced to bear such a heavy burden, because the university’s budget shortfall is the state Legislature’s fault.

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