

# ILLINOIS PUBLIC UNIVERSITIES BUDGET TALKING POINTS

- Each year, nine public universities educate 200,000 students, who are the state's future leaders. These universities, longstanding economic anchors in every region of Illinois, represent over one million alumni living and working in Illinois.
- Illinois public universities all rely on a state appropriation to operate and to serve our hundreds of thousands of Illinois students. The state appropriation is a fundamental tenet of the partnership between the state and the public institutions, enabling us to deliver affordable, high quality education to Illinois residents.
- The alumni, students, parents, faculty, and staff of all nine public universities, representing every county in Illinois, call on the Governor and members of the General Assembly to implement a state budget that supports these public universities and their missions.
- The state appropriation is particularly crucial for the support of professional and service programs that directly benefit the state but do not produce sufficient tuition revenues to cover their operational costs. Those programs are medicine, dentistry, pharmacy, veterinary medicine, law, education, agricultural and consumer sciences.
- The impasse casts a shadow of uncertainty over the campuses. University leaders have reprioritized spending to achieve greater efficiencies and have developed scenarios to deal with the unknown challenges that will be imposed by the final budget. Hiring, salary freezes, and layoffs already have been implemented.
- Students and their families are alarmed about the possibility of financial aid not being available. This uncertainty could create enough anxiety and confusion that students may decide not to enroll for the next semester or opt to transfer to an out-of-state school.
- Even with drastic cuts to essential instructional, student service, and financial aid programs, universities will be pressed into deficit spending status in FY16. As permanent cuts are regularized, shortages in instruction, teaching staff, student services, and financial aid will diminish the universities' ability to expand enrollments. In a vicious cycle, each cut will impede measures designed to produce enrollment growth and financial improvement.
- Our missions include teaching, discovery, health care, innovation, and the transformation of young lives, all to be accomplished with excellence and a commitment to continuous improvement. Those missions are regional and statewide economic engines, generating total employment of 61,000 and annual total spending of \$6.9 billion. Using a modest 4 to 1 multiplier, this spending generates an estimated \$28 billion in economic impact and development in the State of Illinois.
- For each dollar in direct state appropriations public universities receive, the universities leverage four dollars in non-state funding. This includes the more than \$1.5 billion in research grants and out-of-state tuition dollars that the universities bring to the Illinois economy. When standard economic multipliers are used, the impact is in the billions of dollars.
- Reduced capacity in all major areas of university productivity will directly and negatively affect the experience of students, with consequences that include larger classes in obsolete and unmaintained classrooms, reduced financial aid, higher loan debt, reduced graduation rates, and increased time to achieve a degree.

- Leading faculty will leave and promising new faculty will not join the universities. Research dollars will be diminished, as campuses become less competitive. A sinking reputation will lower the quality of the students attracted to these universities. As the value of degrees erodes, the universities' contribution to the state workforce and the economic impact will shrink.
- While the loss of a state appropriation would be the equivalent to a 100% tuition increase at some institutions, a tuition increase of that magnitude would price an Illinois public university out of reach of lower- and middle-income students and likely would result in University closures. This would affect tens of thousands of faculty, staff, and students who would likely leave the state for educational opportunities. That talent base may never return to the state, which would further erode the Illinois tax base and make the state unattractive to businesses and industry.

## ILLINOIS PUBLIC UNIVERSITIES BUDGET EXAMPLE LETTER TO THE EDITOR

### Universities Are Being Left Behind in the Budget Debate

One of the state of Illinois's greatest assets is the strength and diversity of its public higher education system. Our state's nine public universities educate more than 200,000 students in communities from Chicago to Carbondale each year.

Potentially massive budget cuts and ongoing uncertainty about education funding undermine these critical, job-creating assets and have a negative impact on students, parents, alumni and employees.

Slashing higher education funding would undercut the academic reputation of universities, threaten their ability to recruit high-quality students and new faculty, and diminish their capacity to draw outside funding from donors and grants.

Moreover, such cuts undermine the state's future. After all, an educated workforce is essential to Illinois's long-term economic vitality.

Our state has big problems that will require grand solutions. I hope we don't see today's penny-pinching turn into bigger losses for the state's economy and its residents down the line.

Funding higher education is a necessity, not a luxury.

Name

Hometown

Phone number

Email address