



KANSAS BOARD OF REGENTS

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STATE UNIVERSITY BUILDINGS CONTINUE TO CRUMBLE

State Continues to Ignore Maintenance Needs, Down-Payment Critically Needed

(TOPEKA) – Today the Kansas Board of Regents released an updated study of the maintenance needs on the six state university campuses that have simply been deferred due to a lack of state funding. The state's universities now face a daunting and increasingly dangerous maintenance backlog of \$727 million that continues to grow.

“Every homeowner knows that routine maintenance and repair becomes only more expensive and more dangerous the longer you ignore it,” said Reginald L. Robinson, President and CEO of the Board of Regents. “The State of Kansas, which owns the buildings on our state university campuses, must fulfill its responsibility as a landlord. Our campuses are in a serious state of disrepair, and duct tape can no longer fix this growing problem.”

A 2004 Board of Regents' study indicated that the state universities faced a deferred maintenance backlog of \$584 million. However, this backlog has increased to \$727 million due to a significant increase in construction inflation, increased age of the buildings, and more importantly, because of the continued under-funding of building maintenance by the State of Kansas. A 2005 study by the Legislature's Division of Post Audit confirmed this chronic under-funding.

In addition to the maintenance backlog, \$84 million per year is required to adequately maintain the buildings on the state university campuses. However, the State only provided \$15 million this year – leaving 82% of required annual building maintenance unaddressed.

“As the Governor works to prepare her Fiscal Year 2008 budget, and as state revenues continue to improve, we will continue to strongly urge her to make a down-payment on this increasingly critical issue,” added Regent Nelson Galle, Chairman of the Board of Regents. “A few years ago, when the state needed money during the recession, the state universities experienced significant budget reductions which were never restored. Now is the time to re-invest in higher education.”

Two out of every three buildings that the State of Kansas owns can be found on campuses of the six state universities. These 567 academic and administrative buildings (which exclude auxiliary facilities such as residence halls, student unions, and parking garages) represent 20.5 million square feet that are sited on 2,250 maintained acres. To put this amount of space into perspective, 20.5 million square feet is the equivalent of just over 355 football fields. The replacement value of these buildings, which are owned by the State of Kansas and are assets of the Kansas taxpayer, is \$4.5 billion. 80% of the total state university building inventory is at least 20 years old.

It is vitally important that university building maintenance be addressed because the state universities continue to experience record enrollments, serving almost 90,000 students annually. Today, out-dated campus facilities frequently do not meet student needs, and students are forced to prepare for an increasingly challenging and competitive job market in buildings that are vastly out-dated. In addition, the state's commitment to higher education is an important factor when businesses consider moving to Kansas or when Kansas businesses consider expanding. Investment in state university infrastructure is vital if we are to meet the education needs of the new global economy.

The condition of university buildings also influences where students decide to pursue higher education. A 2005 study by the Association of Physical Plant Administrators surveyed over 16,000 college students and found that 73% of students said facilities related to their major were extremely or very important in deciding where they would attend college. The State of Kansas must commit to providing a high quality university learning environment if we intend to keep the best and brightest students in Kansas.

The university deferred building maintenance problem is not unique to Kansas. Nationwide deferred maintenance backlog estimates vary from \$26 billion, which is acknowledged to be conservative, to over \$50 billion. However, other states have recently taken proactive steps towards addressing this issue. A few of these states include: Oklahoma (\$500 million investment in 2005), Missouri (\$350 million proposed investment in 2007), and Arkansas (\$250 million investment in 2006).

The maintenance backlog on the six state university campuses is as follows:

Kansas State University	\$254.1 million
The University of Kansas	\$208.5 million
The University of Kansas Medical Center	\$75.6 million
Pittsburg State University	\$58.6 million
Emporia State University	\$44.7 million
Wichita State University	\$44.1 million
Fort Hays State University	\$40.9 million
TOTAL:	\$727 million

The complete "Report on State University Deferred and Annual Maintenance" can be found at the following link: www.kansasregents.org.

The nine-member Kansas Board of Regents is the governing board of the state's six public universities and a coordinating board for nineteen community colleges, ten technical institutions, and a municipal university.

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