



KANSAS BOARD OF REGENTS



WASHBURN<sup>TM</sup>  
UNIVERSITY

March 30, 2011

Dear Kansas Legislator:

On behalf of the Kansas Board of Regents and the Washburn University Board of Regents, we write to you regarding the House Appropriations Committee's recent decision to slash Washburn's state operating grant funding by 50% (\$5.5 million). We respectfully request that this budget reduction be removed and Washburn's funding be restored.

Governor Sam Brownback has repeatedly emphasized the necessity of supporting higher education to help improve and grow the Kansas economy and position the state to be more globally competitive. In his Fiscal Year 2012 budget proposal, the Governor did not recommend reducing funding for the state's public higher education system, which includes Washburn. This recommendation recognizes the 12% (over \$100 million) cut the system has taken over the past two years.

We support a unified budget request without individual institutions being singled out for funding reductions. Since the adoption of Senate Bill 345 in 1999, the Kansas Board of Regents and our state's 32 public colleges and universities have worked tirelessly to build a coordinated and collaborative approach to provide cost-effective access to higher education. We have made great progress in that regard. Actions, such as the amendment to take 50% of Washburn's operating grant, undermine these positive efforts. Further, this sort of action is fundamentally unfair. There was no communication with Washburn or the Kansas Board of Regents about the proposed reduction, and there has been no indication of the basis or reason for this decision. It is not appropriate to single out only one of 32 public colleges and universities for such treatment.

In the past two years, budget reductions, while difficult, have been shared among all public higher education institutions, and no single institution has attempted to serve only the best interests of itself. The state's public colleges and universities have all worked together to develop systemwide goals to position Kansas with a well-educated populace that meets our need to grow a strong economy.

Washburn is a valued and respected member of the state's higher education community. We reiterate our strong support for the restoration of Washburn's funding. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Gary Sherrer  
Chair  
Kansas Board of Regents

Christel E. Marquardt  
Chairperson  
Washburn University Board of Regents