

K-STATE Educate. Motivate. Activate.

WILDCATS *for* HIGHER EDUCATION



Wildcats for Higher Education - April 12, 2017

Please contact your local legislators now

Last Friday, the Kansas Legislature adjourned until May 1, and when they return they will still have three significant challenges to address: state budget, tax policy and the school finance formula. All three of these issues could have a serious impact on funding for higher education, depending on the approach legislators and the administration take in attempting to resolve the state's financial challenges.

After nearly three months of debate and committee work, they have come up short on agreeing to any long-term solution to the challenges. However, there is one positive note: before adjourning, legislators passed a Rescission Bill (HB 2052) that funds the state budget for the remainder of fiscal year 2017 without making any further cuts to K-State and higher education in FY 2017.

Clearly, the legislators' work is cut out for them when they return in May.

Our work, as Wildcats for Higher Education, is to make sure legislators, on all sides of the issues, understand how important higher education is to the state's economy. It's critical that they make sound decisions on budgets, tax policy and a school financing formula to ensure Kansans stay competitive through the fundamental benefits of quality education. The state's future is at stake.

We acknowledge the challenge before the legislators is huge. Reports indicate that Kansas is facing a budget shortfall of \$1 billion for fiscal years 2018 and 2019 combined. That shortfall is compounded by the Kansas Supreme Court ruling that the state's school funding for K-12 is inadequate and unconstitutional. The court gave the legislators until June 30 to come up with a new school funding formula. That funding is also important as students need a solid education before entering higher education or seeking employment.

Now is the time to reach out and contact your legislators while they are in their districts. Our message, as they go back and work on budgets and tax policy, is that the state can't afford to neglect education in Kansas anymore. Higher education in the state has been cut over \$75.1 million in the last three years. K-State's share of that cut has been \$23.7 million.

More cuts and inadequate funding for education will have a long-term, negative impact on the state. An educated population is critical for economic growth and quality of life. According to a study on the economic impact of the Kansas Board of Regents System, **the state's universities produced over \$7.3 billion in economic impact to the state in 2010 and each dollar in state tax support for the universities resulted in \$11.94 in Kansas economic activity.**

Furthermore, counties with Kansas Board of Regents institutions experienced higher rates of growth in technology firms, lower rates of net out-migration and higher rates of job growth, all of which contribute to the state's economic progress.

Remind your legislators that higher education has a significant economic impact on the state. It can be a solution to the financial challenges. We need their support in developing budgets and tax policies that will provide fair and stable funding for higher education - a resource that will give back through its economic impact on the state.

For additional information on legislative bills impacting higher education and K-State, please visit [K-State's Governmental Relations website](#).

With more than 132,000 K-State graduates and friends living in the state of Kansas our voice makes a difference. Please contact your legislators today.

Go 'Cats!

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K-State Alumni Association

K-State alumni and friends are encouraged to ask their state legislators to support higher education. Please visit the K-State Alumni Association's [Wildcats for Higher Education](#) web page for more information on the messages and facts to support higher education.

If you know of other K-State alumni and friends who would like to receive Wildcats for Higher Education updates, please forward this message.

If this message was forwarded to you and you would like to receive Wildcats for Higher Education updates, please [sign up here](#).

The Kansas State University Office of Government Relations also provides weekly updates on legislative issues important to K-State and higher education. [View updates](#) when the Legislature is in session.

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