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WILDCATS
for **HIGHER**
EDUCATION



Wildcats for Higher Education - March 23, 2018

Dear Wildcats for Higher Education,

Over the past two months we have closely monitored activity in the Kansas Legislature that could impact higher education. As we reported in our Jan. 11 WHE newsletter, the state budget is our top priority this year.

Today, we are seeking your help in contacting your legislators and asking for their support in prioritizing higher education when making budget decisions in the weeks ahead.

The Kansas Board of Regents and the six universities in the state's higher education system are united in requesting the restoration of nearly \$24 million in budget cuts made to higher education in fiscal year 2017. K-State's portion of that cut is \$4.87 million.

Unfortunately, the governor's budget recommendations released in January did not include restoration of higher education funding. That makes our advocacy work even more crucial.

Higher education plays a significant role in contributing to the state's economic prosperity by developing a skilled workforce that enables the state to compete in the global marketplace. Higher education develops leaders and entrepreneurs who create jobs and support communities. Research conducted by higher education institutions supports advancements in business and industry, while adding to the quality of life not only for Kansans but for the global population.

Nearly 95 percent of recent K-State bachelor's graduates are employed in their career field or furthering their education. Studies show that college graduates pay more in taxes, require less public assistance, donate more to charities and are more involved in their communities.

In addition, K-State contributes to the Kansas economy nearly \$710 million in operating budget from non-state appropriations, more than \$116 million in competitively awarded funding for research and \$153 million in private donor contributions.

We acknowledge our legislators are also addressing the Kansas Supreme Court ruling on school finance and have until April 30 to develop a plan that adequately funds K-12 education. It is important that K-12 education is adequately funded, but we believe higher education at public universities should be part of an overall state education funding strategy. Restoring the budget cuts made in fiscal year 2017 will be a start; however, more work will be required in the future to adequately fund higher education.

The KBOR Student Advisory Committee (consisting of all university student body presidents in the state) has taken a step in that direction. On March 7, the students filed an application to submit an amicus curiae brief to the Kansas Supreme Court on the Gannon vs. Kansas case on constitutional obligations for K-12 funding. If the application is accepted, it will allow the SAC to submit a brief arguing that the Kansas Constitution includes all levels of public education, not just K-12. All briefs are due to the court by April 30 for the court to make a decision by June 30.

Higher education is critical for the future of Kansas and Kansas families. Dennis Mullin, KBOR vice-chair, recently said in a news release, "Studies show that by 2020 more than two-thirds of jobs in Kansas will require education beyond high school. Past cuts to public higher education pose significant challenges in our state's ability to meet the increasing skilled workforce demands of the Kansas economy."

Please contact your legislators today and ask for their support in restoring the nearly \$24 million made in budget cuts to higher education in fiscal year 2017. Their help is also needed in making sure post-secondary education is adequately funded. The future of Kansas depends on an educated populace.

Legislators need to hear from you and know that you believe higher education is important to the success of your communities and to the state of Kansas. Your voice does make a difference. For information on contacting your legislators, please visit the Kansas Legislature website: www.kslegislature.org/li. For additional information on legislative activity impacting higher education and K-State, please visit K-State's Governmental Relations website: www.k-state.edu/govrelations/state.

Thanks for your support and loyalty to K-State.

Go 'Cats!



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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.

Brought to you by the K-State Alumni Association

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