



January 27, 2016

The Honorable Governor Rauner, Senate President Cullerton, Senate Minority Leader Radogno, House Speaker Madigan, and House Minority Leader Durkin:

With the recent introduction of an amendment to Senate Bill 2043, providing funding for community colleges and the MAP program, we would like to reiterate our budget priorities on behalf of the students of all nine Illinois public universities.

University of Illinois
President Timothy L. Killeen

Chicago State University
President Thomas J. Calhoun, Jr.

Eastern Illinois University
President David M. Glassman

Governors State University
President Elaine P. Maimon

Illinois State University
President Larry H. Dietz

Northeastern Illinois University
President Sharon K. Hahs

Northern Illinois University
President Doug Baker

Southern Illinois University
President Randy J. Dunn

Western Illinois University
President Jack Thomas

The prolonged budget impasse is already inflicting irreversible damage on our four-year public universities and each day that passes with no relief makes it that much more difficult to educate our students and fulfill our mission of service to the state. Over the past seven months the state's public universities have done everything in our power to weather the absence of state funding, but those efforts have depleted reserves and created varying levels of fiscal crisis throughout the universities.

So we again call on the governor and the General Assembly to pass a full FY 2016 budget that funds public universities at the amount agreed upon by the legislature in May 2015. We continue to accept this 8.6% reduction from our FY 2015 appropriation as a sign of our willingness to be responsible partners in solving the state's budget crisis. A proposed higher education budget that includes a 31.5% cut or funds universities for only part of the year is insufficient and would aggravate the ongoing funding crisis that threatens higher education in Illinois.

Restored funding is needed immediately to prevent further operational harm. As we enter the eighth month of this unprecedented impasse, we emphasize again that we welcome the opportunity to work with the General Assembly and the governor on reforms to increase efficiencies in higher education that will provide for greater access, affordability and degree attainment for all Illinois students.

Sincerely,



University of Illinois
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Northeastern Illinois University
President Sharon K. Hahs



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