



May 16, 2012

This is a special edition of the USM Legislative Newsletter highlighting the actions of the Maryland General Assembly in a special session that concluded an hour ago.

The 2012 Legislative Session for Maryland's public universities began against the backdrop of a cautiously improving state and national economy. In difficult economic times the state must prioritize what it can and cannot afford. With the passage of the fiscal year 2013 budget, Governor O'Malley and the General Assembly have bucked the national trend of deep cuts in higher education programs and services.

Chancellor Kirwan, institution Presidents, and the Board of Regents made clear the devastating effect the "Doomsday" budget proposal would have had on the USM – *a \$50 million cut by conservative estimates and a potential double-digit increase in tuition.*

In ironing out their differences and coming to agreement on both a revenue package and operating budget, the legislative and executive branches have reaffirmed their staunch commitment to keep Maryland's public universities affordable and accessible.

Given the state of the economy, the operating and capital budgets speak volumes about the Governor's and General Assembly's support for public higher education. **We are pleased to report that for the first time in four years USM employees will receive a 2% cost of living adjustment beginning January 1, 2013.**

Fiscal Year 2013 State Budget Actions:

- **\$5.3 million General Fund Cut to USM**
- **\$1 Million Restriction for incentive funds for USM Institutions to offer new programs at the Non-USM Regional Higher Education Centers**
- **2% COLA beginning January 1, 2013**
- **\$5 Million Fund Balance Transfer**
- **Operationally Critical Staff retention and Faculty retention pay authorization extended**

The USM thanks the thousands of staff, students and faculty who took time to weigh-in with legislators concerning the fiscal year 2013 budget. Nearly 22,000 messages were delivered to every senator and delegate to make the case for public higher education. Without your help and advocacy the outcome could have been dire.