



February 8, 2013

FOCUS SHIFTS TO UNIVERSITY SYSTEM BUDGET; CHANCELLOR MAKES CASE FOR ENHANCED INVESTMENTS

On Wednesday, Chancellor Kirwan appeared before the House Subcommittee on Education and Economic Development to testify on the Governor's FY 2014 budget recommendations for the University System of Maryland. The Chancellor made a repeat performance in Senate Budget and Taxation, Subcommittee on Education, Business and Administration Subcommittee yesterday.

Chancellor Kirwan thanked members of the budget committees for their past support of higher education and mounted a vigorous defense of the Governor's FY 2014 budget. With \$1.2 billion in state funds for the USM, representing a funding increase of \$82.3 million, or 7.7 percent, the Governor's budget builds on a critical momentum of investment in its public university system. Of the \$82.3 million, \$57.9 million is for current services, or mandatory cost increases, and \$24.4 million is for enhanced funding in vital areas of state and USM needs: STEM and health education; commercialization; and academic transformation. The USM will further advance its progress in these areas with an additional \$10 million of internal institutional funds, bringing total enhancement funding to more than \$34 million.

The Chancellor emphasized that the Governor's budget proposal would enable USM to keep tuition increases modest (3%), and further solidify Maryland's reputation as a national leader in keeping college costs in check.

A full copy of the Chancellor's testimony can be found at:

<http://www.usmd.edu/usm/legislation/>

TAX-FREE PERIOD FOR COLLEGE TEXTBOOKS HEARD IN HOUSE

House Bill 52 would establish two annual 14-day sales tax-free periods – one in August/September and one in January – in which textbooks bought by a full- or part-time student enrolled at a USM institution would be exempt from the sales and use tax. The bill would take effect July 1, 2013.

While there is some debate, legislative analysts expected General Fund revenues to decrease by \$6.3 million in FY 2014 based on assumptions related to projected enrollment and a 3% increase in textbook costs.

Delegates showed general concern about the overall expense related to textbooks and textbook pricing. Zach Cohen, Chair of the USM Student Council and a student at College Park testified that truly “every penny counts” and that \$50 in savings is enough to persuade students to purchase from online or out of state vendors.

EXPANDED PROGRAM AUTHORIZATION FOR UMCES

On Tuesday, President Don Boesch testified before the House Appropriations Committee on House Bill 268. House Bill 268 allows the University of Maryland Center for Environmental Science (UMCES) to award graduate degrees in marine and environmental sciences jointly with another public senior higher education institution and award post-baccalaureate certificates.

For more than 35 years UMCES has been extensively engaged in graduate education, including delivering courses to and directing the research and training of masters and doctoral candidates at their facilities. Joint degrees will allow UMCES to: continue to make research excellence their hallmark; build and strengthen ties with partner institutions; assure that UMCES students will have exceptional access to facilities, programs and broad faculty expertise; and minimize costs and avoid duplication.

USM TESTIFIES IN SUPPORT OF ACADEMIC CREDIT FOR MILITARY EDUCATION

Senate Bill 153 sponsored by Senator Curry, and Senate Bill 273, sponsored by Governor O’Malley require the Maryland Higher Education Commission (MHEC), in consultation with the public institutions of higher education in the State, to develop and adopt guidelines on awarding academic credit for a student’s military training, coursework, and education. The Board of Regents must develop and implement policies in accordance with the guidelines developed by MHEC on or before January 1, 2014.

Yesterday, the Governor, Lieutenant Governor, and Senator Curry testified together on their respective measures agreeing to use the Governor’s bill as the legislative vehicle. The hearing was before the Senate Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs Committee chaired by Senator Joan Carter Conway.

USM and officials representing University of Maryland University College testified in strong support of both bills. A current UMUC student and Staff Sergeant testified regarding her own experience converting military education to academic credit. Both bills set in motion a collaborative process to develop guidelines and policies to better serve Maryland's servicemembers. A widely recognized bridge between the military world and higher education is Servicemembers Opportunity Colleges (SOC), which is funded by the Department of Defense (DoD) through a contract with the American Association of State Colleges and Universities (AASCU). Consortium members recognize and use American Council on Education's "*Guide to the Evaluation of Educational Experiences in the Armed Services*" in calculating and awarding academic credit for military training and experience.

USM reported to the committee that all of USM's comprehensive undergraduate institutions are members of SOC and recognize ACE-endorsed transcripts as official documentation of military education and accurate records of applicable ACE credit recommendations.

HIRING PREFERENCES FOR GRADUATES OF PUBLIC INSTITUTIONS OF HIGHER EDUCATION

Yesterday, in the Senate Finance Committee, legislators heard testimony on Senate Bill 329 that would require all appointing authorities in the State Personnel Management System (SPMS) to apply a one-point credit on a selection test for applicants who have successfully completed a degree at an institution of higher education in Maryland. The bill was amended to include independent colleges and universities – not just public universities. Appointing authorities in the Legislative Branch and Judiciary, as well as those with independent personnel management systems in the Executive Branch, would be required to provide an equivalent hiring preference.

The sponsor, Senator Lisa Gladden, said that the bill is necessary to retain Maryland graduates who have "shown a commitment" to remain and work the state. A legislative aide to Senator Gladden testified that state employers already award points based on various preferences including, but not limited to, veteran status, state residency, current state employment, and residents of high unemployment counties seeking employment in a correctional facility. All other qualifications being equal, if a college degree is required, then the Maryland degree would be preferred in recruitment, examination and selection.

According to the fiscal analysis done by the Department of Legislative Services, "*the assignment of a one-point credit to applicants who have graduated from a public institution of higher education may mean that (1) some candidates who are otherwise deemed to be unqualified may become qualified for a position or (2) qualified applicants may be placed in a higher qualification level than they would otherwise be.*" DLS added, depending on the level of enforcement and verification imposed by appointing authorities, there may be significant administrative costs associated with this proposal.

LEGISLATIVE & BUDGET HEARINGS (FEBRUARY 11 – 22)

Higher Education Policy Briefing - College Readiness

Senate Budget & Taxation - Subcommittee on Education, Business, and Administration
(Joint with the House Appropriations Education and Economic Development
Subcommittee)

3 West, Miller Senate Office Building

1pm

SB 341

Academic Program Action - Repeal of Application Fees

Senate Education, Health and Environmental Affairs

February 13

1:00pm

SB 414

Tuition Waiver – Foster Care Recipients

Senate Education, Health and Environmental Affairs

February 13

1:00pm

SB 431

University System of Maryland – Quasi-Endowments

Senate Budget & Taxation

February 20

1:00pm

HB 400

Management-Intensive Farming and Grazing

House Environmental Matters

February 13

1pm

HB 508

Local Stormwater Management Charges – State Property

House Environmental Matters

February 20

1pm

HB 526

Maryland First Scholarship – Creation and Funding

House Ways & Means

February 20

1pm

NEW BILLS

HB 734/SB 808; University System of Maryland - Institution Management – Admissions
HB 739; Public institutions of Higher Education – Legal Presence and Tuition Rates
HB 740/SB 705; Exemption from Paying Non-Resident Graduate Tuition –
Servicemembers
SB 676; Governmental Procedures – Security and Protection of Information
SB 677; Collective Bargaining State LRB & HELRB – Enforcement Authority
SB 695; Employment with Political Subdivisions and Public Institution of Higher
Education
SB 704/HB 52; Tax-Free Periods – University and College Textbooks
SB 714/ HB 87; Income Tax – Subtraction Modification – Student Loan Debt
SB 740; College Readiness and Completion Act of 2013
SB 812; Tuition Cap and College Opportunity Act of 2013
SB 838; Educational Institutions – Personal electronic Account – Privacy
SB 841; Higher Education Fair Share Act
SB 844; Public Information – Electronic Mail Addresses – Web Site Notice
SB 845; Public Information Act – Required Denials – Electronic Mail Addresses

Full Operating Budget Schedule

Bowie State University, Frostburg State University,
February 13, 2013
1:00 p.m.
House Appropriations

Bowie State University, Frostburg State University
February 14, 2013
1:00 p.m.
Senate Budget and Taxation

Towson University, University of Maryland Baltimore County, Salisbury University
February 21, 2013
1:00 p.m.
House Appropriations

University of Maryland Eastern Shore, University of Maryland University College
February 27, 2013
1:00 p.m.
House Appropriations

Salisbury University, Towson University, University of Maryland University College
February 28, 2013
1:00 p.m.
Senate Budget and Taxation

University of Maryland Baltimore County, University of Maryland Eastern Shore
March 4, 2013
1:00 p.m.
Senate Budget and Taxation