Coppin State University

CAPITAL BUDGET HEARING FISCAL YEAR 2014

Maryland House Committee on Appropriations Education & Economic Development Subcommittee
Capital Budget Subcommittee

March 19, 2013

Testimony by Interim President Dr. Mortimer Neufville
Mr. Chairman and members of the Committee:

I am Dr. Mortimer Neufville, Interim President of Coppin State University. Thank you for the opportunity to testify on the Governor’s FY2014 Capital Budget Request for Coppin State University. The University is in agreement with the analysis provided by the Legislative Analyst for the FY2014 Science and Technology Center Project and the Pedestrian Bridge ADA Improvements Project, and we express our deep appreciation for the recommendations.

It is important to note that enhancement of capital funding is essential for Coppin’s revitalization and its deferred development as stated in the September 2001 Office of Civil Rights (OCR) Report of the Independent Study Team on the Revitalization of Coppin. Also, as stated in the 2011 Coppin Study, Coppin’s mission is unique while considerable progress has been made but much remains to be done. The University’s Office of Capital Planning has done a remarkable job in this regard. The FY2014 capital project complies with the updated Facilities Master Plan approved by the University System of Maryland, Board of Regents. Timely infusion of capital funds and project completion will positively impact the University’s mission and its future ability to expand academic offerings and support services provided to students, and help to bring the University more fully into the 21st century.

The planned Science and Technology Center (STC) will also have several positive effects for the University including enhanced educational experiences for students which will help provide our students with the academic educational experiences comparable to those provided at many other colleges and universities in Maryland. This new facility will assist the University in producing graduates to advance the State’s Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) initiative. The primary rationale for the construction of STC is the quality of the existing space currently utilized. The University had a thorough functionality assessment completed for the Percy Julian Science Art Building (PJSAB) in February 2004 by the architectural firm of Richter Cornbrooks Gribble. The study noted current science laboratories are undersized and poorly
designed, creating hazardous and inefficient teaching environments; and recommended a new facility. The STC project will help support the projected enrollment growth of the University as well as enhance Coppin’s teaching capabilities with new state-of-the-art laboratories.

The project boundaries have been enclosed, and contractor’s field office is now operational. The University has received approvals from the Maryland Department of Planning, State Clearinghouse for demolition; Baltimore City Planning Commission for the street and alley closings, Baltimore City “Right of Entry,” MDE discharge permit, and DNR forest conservation. The project is on schedule with abatement and demolition. Utility work is progressing and the installation of sanitation lines under North Avenue has begun. The foundation work will begin next month and the project is scheduled to be completed by January 2015.

The University expects to maintain the new facility from operating funds received from the State when a new facility comes on line. The new STC is so important and beneficial to the students; faculty and staff that operational adjustments and reallocations will be made to support its operations. The University will be in a better position to execute the mandates of our mission to meet the emerging educational and career opportunities in granting disciplines, while addressing many critical facility deficiencies in its academic environment. Students will have competitive access to learning environments crucial for their academic and professional careers.

Last Fall 2012, the University made the decision not to build an expensive garage; (UMB Service Center sent out a bid package and received one (1) bid response at $12.4M for 220 spaces) and instead recommended an enclosure with a permanent stair tower and an elevator to make the crossover bridge ADA (Americans with Disabilities Act) compliant utilizing residual funds from CSU completed projects. This project would have been completed under the original Health & Human Services Building (HHSB) project if there were no plans for a garage.

The pedestrian crossover bridge provides a safe and convenient means of getting across North Avenue, a major thoroughfare running thru Coppin’s north and south campus. It is extensively used by students, faculty, staff, and visitors. The stair tower and elevator project will make the bridge in compliance with the ADA requirements.

We share with the State of Maryland and the University System of Maryland a commitment to provide our students state of the art educational facilities to enhance teaching and learning and greatly appreciate your continued support of Coppin State University.
New Science & Technology Center (STC):

New Science and Technology Center (STC) 73,554 NASF/150,332 GSF is currently under construction to house science related disciplines including natural sciences, biology, physics, chemistry, general sciences, environmental sciences, preparing students to enter professional schools in dentistry, pharmacy, and medicine or to pursue careers in industry of science and technology. STC will also include new academic space to support mathematics and computer science programs. This building will provide focus on the University’s highest quality educational mission to students, faculty, staff, and the community; providing state of the art classrooms, lecture halls, computer labs, science labs, research areas, conference areas, multidisciplinary workshops, technical support spaces, office spaces, and other support services traditional to academic science and technology buildings. The science programs are currently housed in the Percy Julian Arts and Science building, which has inappropriate and undersized laboratories. Its poor design has created an inefficient teaching and learning environment. The new STC will provide a state of the art technology based learning environment; which will build an academic identity for Coppin’s commitment to the academic disciplines and professional practices associated with science and technology. Coppin will be in a better position to execute the mandates of our mission to meet the emerging educational and career opportunities in granting disciplines while addressing many critical facility deficiencies in its academic environment. Students will have competitive access to learning environments crucial for their academic and professional careers. The new STC facility is located on the Southside of North Avenue adjacent to the Health and Human Services Building. Site work, abatement, and demolition is progressing and site utilities work is underway. The program for the new Science and Technology Center has been approved by the Department of Budget and Management (DBM).

FY2014 Request: $60,428,000.00 (Construction & Equipment)
Pedestrian Bridge ADA Improvements:

The crossover pedestrian bridge over North Avenue was designed and constructed as a part of the Health and Human Services Building (HHSB) project which was occupied Fall 2008. The crossover bridge provides a safe and convenient means of getting across North Avenue, a major thoroughfare running thru Coppin’s north and south campus. The crossover bridge is extensively used by students, faculty, staff, and visitors.

The pedestrian crossover bridge was intended to connect to a future parking garage on campus. However, the cost of the parking garage was significantly higher than expected and will not be constructed at this time. In order to make the bridge ADA (Americans with Disabilities Act) compliant, a permanent enclosure comprising of a stair tower with an elevator is required. The project will also include some site modifications and the relocation of underground utility lines. The FY2014 budget includes funds to design, construct and equip a stair tower with an elevator.

The Facility Program for the Pedestrian Bridge ADA Improvements has been approved by the Department of Budget and Management.

FY2014 Request: $1,786,000.00 (Planning, Construction & Equipment)