



BUDGET UPDATE

March 25, 2011

Dear members of the university community:

We are now in the third week of the 2011 Legislative Session and our team is hard at work making the case for continued investment in higher education and particularly in FIU.

The State of Florida faces challenging economic times with a projected revenue shortfall of more than \$3.7 billion. The decisions the Legislature makes will be critical to the future of our State and our institution and will directly impact how we are able to serve our students, engage with our community and fulfill our strategic plan.

Although it is very early in the legislative session, we are carefully monitoring budget and other substantive recommendations that will have an impact on the SUS and FIU.

While the governor's recommended operating budget does not reduce our recurring state appropriations, the initial recommendations from the House and Senate will reduce our recurring appropriations by approximately 10 and 8 percent respectively. These reductions could be partially offset by a 15 percent tuition increase. The House is recommending a 5 percent base tuition increase and a 10 percent tuition differential fee increase.

Additionally, the House budget recommendation will reduce appropriations to the Herbert Wertheim College of Medicine by \$2 million, roughly an 8 percent reduction. Full funding is a central element of a successful Liaison Committee on Medical Education (LCME) accreditation process. The Senate draft budget, on the other hand, comes very close to fully funding our College of Medicine.

The climate makes this an excellent time for me to update you on our legislative priorities for the upcoming 2011-12 fiscal year and ask you to stay informed.

Our priorities:

- State Investment in FIU to maintain current funding levels
- Herbert Wertheim College of Medicine: \$2 million additional recurring state dollars
- Public Education Capital Outlay (PECO) trust funds for facilities
- New Florida Initiative for Florida's knowledge economy. Fund at \$14.8 million
- Tuition policy to support base tuition increase
- Pension Reform that is fair

For more [details on these priorities](#) and other related activities, please visit the [Governmental Relations page](#).

We kicked off the session with an energy-packed FIU Day in Tallahassee.

A delegation of students, administrators, faculty, and nine members of our Board of Trustees joined me in Tallahassee to advocate for our legislative priorities. We were also joined in Tallahassee by Football Coach Mario Cristobal, named Sun Belt Coach of the Year, and FIU student athlete T.Y. Hilton, last season's Sun Belt Conference Most Valuable Player.

The group was on hand when the Senate and House both passed resolutions honoring the entire FIU Football team for its Sun Belt Conference Championship title and Bowl Game win. The sponsors were Senator Anitere Flores, Representative Ana Rivas-Logan and Representative Jeanette Nuñez, all FIU Alumnae. Please visit news.fiu.edu to learn more about [FIU Day in Tallahassee](#).

The best news out of Tallahassee last week is not related to the budget but would impact our campuses directly. Two bills in the House and Senate were introduced earlier this year that would allow guns on Florida's college campuses. While the legislation is still being discussed, both chambers have exempted campuses from the list of places where guns could be carried.

In the Federal arena, I would also like to call your attention to a budget matter with the potential to impact many of our students. A Congressional proposal is being discussed that would cut federal financial aid, commonly known as Pell Grants. We are concerned about this potential cut and are doing everything we can to help educate our elected officials about the detrimental effects this would have on more than 16,000 FIU students and many more in our community. [A piece I wrote on this topic](#) appeared recently in The Miami Herald.

Finally, I ask you to mark your calendar and plan to attend our **Budget Town Hall meeting scheduled from 2 to 4 p.m. on May 19** at the MARC Pavilion, Modesto Maidique Campus. More details and a simulcast site at the Biscayne Bay Campus will follow. At this meeting we will discuss final decisions reached during the legislative session and how they will impact FIU.

Thank you for your interest in the legislative process and everything you do to keep FIU Worlds Ahead. For daily legislative news, follow [FIUgov on Twitter](#) or [FIU Governmental Relations on Facebook](#).

Sincerely,



Mark B. Rosenberg
President