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Update on Springfield Decisions - A Memo to the GSU Community

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From: President
Sent: Thursday, June 6, 2019 12:12 PM
To: Perdue, Penny, University Community
Subject: Memo from President Maimon - Springfield Update

Governors State University

Springfield Update

Date: June 6, 2019

To: GSU Campus Community

From: Elaine P. Maimon, Ph.D., President

As you have been reading in the press, the legislative session concluded on an active, upbeat, bi-partisan note. Here are the implications for Governors State University:

- **FY20 Operations:**

GSU, like most other public universities, received a 5% increase over the appropriation for FY19. That was the amount specified in Governor Pritzker's February Budget Address and the amount we used for PBAC deliberations. The Governor had alerted the public university presidents that he was aware that his suggested increase was not adequate, and he indicated that as new revenue sources became available in future years, he would keep in mind the need for additional investment in the public universities. The fact of the matter is that the FY20 appropriation does not even bring us close to FY15—the last year of stable funding, although not in itself a very good year, as those who were here then remember. In addition, the public universities, including GSU, have never recovered the 70% cut in appropriations in FY16. In short, FY20 will continue to be an austerity year, requiring judicious expenditures and careful investments along the lines discussed in PBAC.

- **Capital Funding:**

The Governor and General Assembly have taken a new—and better—approach to capital funding. In the past, the General Assembly approved a capital bill once a decade. Last weekend, the General Assembly and Governor changed that dysfunctional approach. Governors State and other public universities are slated for a six-year period of capital allocations, including deferred maintenance and for GSU the possibility of a new classroom building. On capital, appropriation is not enough. The funds have to be released by both the Capital Development Board (CDB) and the

Governor's Office of Management and Budget (GOMB). The release of these funds will depend on many factors, including the amount of money realized from new revenue streams. Those who were at GSU in 2009-10 may remember that the allocation for the renovation of the science wing (E & F) was just the beginning of a long process of lobbying.

- **New Revenue Streams:**

Yes, new revenue means new taxes. In the last days of the General Assembly, several new (more than expected) revenue streams were approved, some dedicated to state operations, some to capital. Most of these taxes will go into effect on January 1, 2020. The constitutional amendment allowing for a graduated income tax (Fair Tax) will be on the November 2020 ballot for voter consideration.

- **Extraordinary work by GSU Representatives in Springfield**

Maureen Kelly, GSU's Legislative Liaison, worked 24/7 on appropriations, capital, and on the over 400 bills that might affect higher education. Please join me in thanking her. The respect that she has from legislators and from the legislative liaisons from other universities benefits us greatly. I also want to thank faculty, students, administrators, and alumni, who joined in an all-out effort to demonstrate that our students are the state's Return on Investment (ROI). Special appreciation to Vice President Will Davis and his team for launching the ROI campaign so brilliantly and in record time. The public university presidents were in Springfield this session more than ever before, and our time there was well spent. Governor Pritzker and Deputy Governors Jesse Ruiz and Christian Mitchell met with us for close to 90 minutes in April. (See the Presidents' [letter](#) to the Governor, Legislative Leaders, and to all those who voted for the budget.)

- **Please thank our elected officials**

Please email or call the Governor's office and your state legislators to thank them for their vote on the budget and the capital bill. (This [link](#) will help you find contact information for your elected officials.) It's never easy for legislators to vote for new taxes, but the budget and new revenue streams had bi-partisan support. Some of our local senators and representatives led the fight. Even more important, the attitude in Springfield has undergone a sea change. Our work at the public universities is now seen as a solution to state woes—and not the problem. This outlook bodes well for the future.

This report comes with my best wishes for a summer that brings each one of you refreshment and renewal.



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