



KANSAS BOARD OF REGENTS

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STATE UNIVERSITY BUILDINGS CONTINUE TO DETERIORATE

Deferred Maintenance Backlog Grows to \$825 million

(TOPEKA) – Today the Kansas Board of Regents released an updated report which details the maintenance needs on the six state university campuses. A 2006 study indicated that state university campuses faced a maintenance backlog of \$663 million. The updated study, conducted during the summer and fall of 2008, indicates that the daunting and increasingly dangerous maintenance backlog has increased to \$825 million, a 24% increase since 2006. The increase can be attributed to a significant increase in construction inflation, the increased age of the campus buildings, and the continued and chronic under-funding of annual maintenance needs.

“It’s no surprise that this problem continues to grow,” said Donna Shank of Liberal, the Chair of the Kansas Board of Regents. “While the 2007 legislation provided an important down-payment, it fell significantly short of the kind of comprehensive solution that would adequately and ultimately address this pressing issue. That being said, the legislation did give us an opportunity to begin work on the most vital maintenance projects and we’ve already seen positive results.”

The maintenance backlog on the state university campuses is as follows:

Kansas State University	\$290.6 million
The University of Kansas	\$226 million
The University of Kansas Medical Center	\$90.5 million
Pittsburg State University	\$67 million
Fort Hays State University	\$51 million
Emporia State University	\$50.6 million
Wichita State University	\$49.3 million
TOTAL:	\$825 million

In 2007, the Legislature approved and the Governor signed into law, a five-year maintenance funding plan which is to provide \$90 million in direct state funds and approximately \$44 million in retained interest earnings to the six state universities. In addition, the legislation provides state-funded tax credits intended to generate up to \$158 million in private contributions to the state universities, Washburn University, and the community and technical colleges. An additional \$100 million in interest-free bonding authority was made available to Washburn University and the community and technical colleges.

For the state universities, the 5-year plan, if fully-funded, will address approximately 31% of the \$825 million maintenance backlog that exists among the 442 state-owned “mission critical” academic buildings. Since the passage of the 5-year plan, the Legislature’s Joint Committee on State Building Construction has approved 91 state university maintenance projects. To date, 37 projects have been initiated, of which 10 have been completed, while 27 are currently underway. If deferred maintenance funding is not cut for Fiscal Year 2010 (the third year of the 5-year plan), eight additional projects are scheduled to be completed and ten additional projects are scheduled to begin.

“The progress made to date will all be for naught if deferred maintenance funding is cut this legislative session; the important investment made to date must be protected and the legislative promise must be kept,” added Shank. “The challenge for us is to balance the current economic reality with the need to protect the safety of our students. Once the state’s economic picture brightens, we look forward to working with the Governor and the Legislature in order to find the ultimate solution to this issue.”

It is vitally important that building maintenance continues to be addressed because the state universities continue to experience record enrollments, serving over 90,000 students annually. Today, out-dated campus facilities frequently do not meet student needs, and students are forced to prepare for an increasingly challenging and competitive job market in buildings that are vastly out-dated. In addition, the state’s commitment to higher education is an important factor when businesses consider moving to Kansas or when Kansas businesses consider expanding. Investment in state university infrastructure is vital if we are to meet the education needs of the new global economy.

The condition of university buildings also influences where students decide to pursue higher education. The Association of Physical Plant Administrators recently surveyed over 16,000 college students and found that 73% of students said facilities related to their major were “extremely” or “very important” in deciding where they would attend college.

The complete “Report on State University Deferred and Annual Maintenance” can be found on the Board’s website at the following link: www.kansasregents.org.

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About the Kansas Board of Regents:

The nine-member Kansas Board of Regents is the governing board of the state’s six universities and the statewide coordinating board for the state’s 32 public higher education institutions (six state universities, a municipal university, nineteen community colleges, and six technical colleges). In addition, the Board administers the state’s student financial aid, adult education, GED, and career and technical education programs. The Board also authorizes private proprietary schools and out-of-state institutions to operate in Kansas, and administers the Kan-ed network, a statewide network that provides broadband Internet access and distance learning capabilities for schools, hospitals, and libraries.

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