



NEWS

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APSCUF PRESIDENT DEEPLY DISAPPOINTED BY GOVERNOR CORBETT'S DECISION TO CUT ADDITIONAL FUNDS FROM HIGHER EDUCATION

Says state funding is crucial for Pennsylvania's state-owned universities to remain affordable for students.

HARRISBURG – The president of the association representing 6,000 faculty members and coaches at Pennsylvania's 14 state-owned universities expressed dismay that the governor requested a five percent mid-year budget freeze for the State System of Higher Education (PASSHE).

The governor has requested the cut just six months after signing a budget that reduced funding for the State System by 18 percent.

"If the State System complies with the governor's request, the total loss to our universities will be over \$112 million," said Dr. Steve Hicks, president of APSCUF. "Students on our campuses have already seen the impact of June's severe budget cut. Their tuition was raised 7.5 percent, they are experiencing larger class sizes, and they are worrying about taking out additional loans to pay for college."

The average State System graduate finishes school with over \$23,000 in student loan debt. As part of his mid-year budget freezes, the Governor also cut five percent, over \$21 million, from the Pennsylvania Higher Education Assistance Agency (PHEAA), the organization that provides grants and loans to students.

"PASSHE has a state-mandated mission to provide a 'high quality education at the lowest possible cost to students.' Our universities cannot continue to meet these goals without

critical state support,” Dr. Hicks stated. “Given that PASSHE is an independent agency, I urge its Board of Governors to think of our students and reject the governor’s request for a \$20 million freeze.”

The governor has proposed mid-year budget freezes totaling approximately \$160 million. While these reductions affect a broad number of state agencies, cuts to higher education, including PHEAA, PASSHE, and four state-related universities, constitute \$67.5 million - over 42 percent - of the total.

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