

David K. Hendrickson
Chair



Paul L. Hill
Chancellor

West Virginia Higher Education Policy Commission
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August 17, 2012

The Honorable Earl Ray Tomblin
Governor
State of West Virginia
1900 Kanawha Boulevard East
Charleston, West Virginia 25305

Dear Governor Tomblin:

As Governor and a past member of the West Virginia State Senate, you have continuously demonstrated your commitment to providing new opportunities for our state and its citizens. Your fiscally responsible leadership has led to advancements across the state and throughout its higher education system spanning decades. Most recently, you were instrumental in the development of a long-term plan to address the Other Post Employment Benefits (OPEB) liability, which will result in lasting economic benefits to the state and its higher education system. Prior to that, the state, under your leadership, restored nearly \$30 million in base funding for higher education, which had been backfilled with federal stimulus funding for several years following a reduction in state appropriations to all agencies. Most importantly, your commitment to students has been unwavering and has been exhibited throughout your selfless career in public service.

The state's higher education system is diligently working to address a multitude of policy challenges facing the state, including: dropout prevention, remediation, and college completion. In addition, the institutions participate in a wide range of activities from serving as economic centers in their respective communities to conducting cutting-edge research. Such activities are critical to the future success of our local communities and our entire state.

On behalf of the West Virginia Higher Education Policy Commission and its member institutions, we respectfully request an exemption for the state's higher education system from the proposed Fiscal Year 2014 budget reduction. The proposed reduction in state appropriations will limit the ability of institutions to fulfill their academic and service missions and, most importantly, reduce available student financial aid funding. The proposed reduction will also increase the burden of student loans for current and future students, ultimately negatively impacting the accessibility and affordability of higher education for all West Virginians.

We would be pleased to meet with you to discuss this important matter. Again, we applaud your exemplary leadership and steadfast commitment to the State of West Virginia, its people, and its students.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "David K. Hendrickson".

David K. Hendrickson, Esq.
Chairman

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Bruce L. Berry".

Bruce L. Berry, MD
Vice Chairman

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Kathy G. Eddy".

Kathy G. Eddy, CPA
Secretary