WESTERN ILLINOIS UNIVERSITY

BOARD OF TRUSTEES

September 10, 2021

Resolution No. 21.9/2

FY2023 Appropriated Operating Budget Recommendations

Amended

**WHEREAS** Western Illinois University prepares annual appropriated operating recommendations for the Illinois Board of Higher Education, Illinois State Legislature and the Governor; and,

**WHEREAS** fiscal year 2023 appropriated operating budget recommendations require Western Illinois University Board of Trustees approval prior to submission; and,

**WHEREAS** the *Fiscal Year 2023 Appropriated Operating Budget Recommendations* presented today advance the goals of the University’s Strategic Plan, *Higher Values in Higher Education,* onboth Western Illinois University campuses, and the Illinois Board of Higher Education’s statewide strategic plan for higher education, *IBHE 2021, A Thriving Illinois: Higher Education Paths to Equity, Sustainability and Growth*;

**THEREFORE** be it resolved that the Board of Trustees approves the fiscal year 2023 appropriated operating budget recommendations as presented in the *Fiscal Year 2023 Appropriated Operating Budget Recommendations* and be it further resolved that the President be authorized to make technical adjustments in the operating budget recommendations if necessary.

Fiscal Year 2023 Appropriated Operating Budget Recommendations

Western Illinois University

Western Illinois University begins fiscal year 2022 with a $110.5 million base appropriation budget (44.9 percent from general revenue and 55.1 percent from income fund). The University recommends a $18.7 million general revenue increase in funding for fiscal year 2023 operations.

Through meaningful state support, internal reallocations, and successful implementation of the University’s Strategic Plan, *Higher Values in Higher Education,* Western Illinois University continues to advance the three goals of The Illinois Board of Higher Education’s *IBHE 2021, A Thriving Illinois: Higher Education Paths to Equity, Sustainability, and Growth*;

Goal One: Close the equity gaps for students who have been left behind.

Goal Two: Build a stronger financial future for individuals and institutions.

Goal Three: Increase talent and innovation to drive economic growth.

Illinois Board of Higher Education guidelines divide operating recommendations into two categories: salary and cost increases and support for program priorities. Salary and cost increases represent 13.1 percent of the University’s budget increase recommendation. This includes funding for salary increases, related Social Security contributions, and other inflationary increases associated with University operations (utilities, library materials, and all other institutional operations). The remaining 86.9 percent of the University’s recommendation supports programs identified in *Higher Values in Higher Education.*



Salary Increases for Faculty and Staff. As stated in *Higher Values in Higher Education,* Western Illinois University’s highest priority is to increase faculty and staff salaries to meet and exceed the mean of peer institutions. The $1.5 million request for salary increases is 59.1 percent of the University’s salary and cost increase recommendation. Salary erosion is a critical issue facing Western Illinois University. The ability to recruit and retain high achieving and diverse faculty and staff is directly related to ensuring educational quality. Our employees have sacrificed a great deal in the recent years with furloughs and salary reductions. Our request attempts to rebuild the salary erosion and ensure competitiveness.

Support for Program Priorities. Western Illinois University is seeking $16.2 million in funding for program priorities identified in *Higher Values in Higher Education*. These include:

* **Enrollment, Retention and Student Success Initiatives ($1,000,000)** to support staffing and programming to further enhance the University’s initiatives in place to provide student assistance, from their initial enrollment at Western through graduation, further enrich the student experience, both in and out of the classroom and ensure students’ academic success.
* **Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Initiatives ($1,000,000)** to support and further enhance initiatives that create and sustain an inclusive environment across all social identities.
* **Student Financial Aid ($3,000,000)** to support access and affordability to higher education.
* **Expanded and New Academic Program Faculty Support ($1,600,000)** funding to fill faculty positions is necessary in order to support enhanced, expanded, and new academic programs to meet the critical workforce needs of our region, the state, and beyond the state’s borders.
* **Quad Cities’ Student Access and Opportunity ($1,100,000)** to support staffing, programming, and facilities enhancements essential to recruiting, retaining, and fostering degree attainment for a diverse student population in the Quad Cities metropolitan area and beyond.
* **STEM, Regional, and High Demand Program ($1,000,000)** provides additional support for critical faculty, staff, and equipment and facilities improvements for STEM programs.
* **Permanent improvements and campus infrastructure enhancements ($5,500,000)** to reduce the deferred maintenance backlog of over $500 million**.**
* **Restoration of budget reductions ($2,000,000**) to restore essential positions that are critical to student success, recruitment, and retention, to further improve technology and academic support and to provide funding for general operating increases.

The requested $16.2 million will help restore Western Illinois University’s status as a state-supported institution of higher education. Between fiscal years 2002 and 2021, state general revenue support for the University decreased by $15.5 million or 23.7 percent. The reduction amount equates to more than $50 million after adjusting to account for inflation using the Higher Education Price Index. During this same time period, unfunded cost increases have been incurred for utilities, Illinois Veterans Grants, CMS health insurance and other unfunded budget items.

The effect is that tuition costs (University Income Fund) associated with vital functions of higher education are being shifted from a shared statewide priority to the responsibility of students and their families.

Changes from Fiscal Year 2022 Operating Recommendation Request

Consistent with the University’s Strategic Plan, salary increases are the University’s highest priority. Cost increases for utilities, library material and other operating expenses are also important. Western Illinois University has not received funding for increased costs in over 20 years.

Western Illinois University is also requesting $16.2 million in state funding to support its Strategic Plan, *Higher Values in Higher Education.* Funds to increase faculty and staff salaries to meet and exceed the average of peer institutions, enrollment, recruitment and retention efforts, diversity initiatives, support for student scholarships, support for academic programs, student access and opportunity initiatives in the Quad Cities and deferred maintenance needs

will improve economic development, educational partnerships, access, diversity, affordability, productivity, and accountability in Illinois public higher education.



**Western Illinois University’s Fiscal Year 2023 Operating Recommendations**

**To the Illinois Board of Higher Education**

Western Illinois University’s fiscal year 2023 operating budget request will be submitted to the Illinois Board of Higher Education October 15, 2021, pending board approval.

**FY2023 OPERATIONS AND GRANTS**

**DETAIL OF RESOURCES REQUESTED FOR NEW PROGRAMS**

**AND PROGRAM PRIORITIES**

NAME OF INSTITUTION: Western Illinois University

TITLE OF REQUEST: Faculty and Staff Salaries

AMOUNT REQUESTED: $1,450,000

SOURCE OF FUNDS REQUESTED: Appropriated Funds

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF REQUEST:

*Higher Values in Higher Education*, Western Illinois University’s Strategic Plan, displays the University’s goals, priorities, and contributions to the statewide strategic plan for higher education, *A Thriving Illinois: Higher Education Paths to Equity, Sustainability and Growth.* Consistent with these plans,Western Illinois University seeks funding for our highest institutional priority: meeting and exceeding average faculty and staff salaries at peer institutions.

At the core of any great university and system of higher education is a dedicated, diverse, and high-achieving employee base. Implementation and the ultimate success of the goals and priorities of *Higher Values in Higher Education* and the *A Thriving Illinois: Higher Education Paths to Equity, Sustainability and Growth* are the direct responsibility of Western Illinois University’s faculty and staff. Compensation is a critical element to the recruitment and retention of a university community dedicated to economic development, educational partnerships, access and diversity, quality, productivity, and accountability.

Recruiting and retaining high-achieving and diverse faculty and staff are directly related to improving the quality of academic and co-curricular programs and services. Such actions in the competitive job market necessitate faculty and staff salaries that meet and exceed the mean of peer institutions.

JUSTIFICATION FOR BUDGET REQUEST:

Illinois’ strengths include its diverse economy, rich natural resources, strategic location, and well-trained workforce. Illinois owes much of its economic success and stability to the strong system of higher education. Continued prosperity is contingent upon statewide partnerships committed to investment in fair, equitable, market value faculty and staff salaries. The resources requested in this partnership proposal will be combined with other University funds to advance the highest priority actions in *Higher Values in Higher Education* which will help provide faculty and staff salaries that meet and exceed the mean of peer institutions.

**FY2023 OPERATIONS AND GRANTS**

**DETAIL OF RESOURCES REQUESTED FOR NEW PROGRAMS**

**AND PROGRAM PRIORITIES**

NAME OF INSTITUTION: Western Illinois University

TITLE OF REQUEST: Enrollment, Retention and Student Success Initiatives

AMOUNT REQUESTED: $1,000,000

SOURCE OF FUNDS REQUESTED: Appropriated Funds

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF REQUEST:

*Higher Values in Higher Education*, Western Illinois University’s Strategic Plan, outlines the goals in areas of student recruitment, student health and wellness, student retention and graduation, and student preparation. To help further these efforts, funds are being requested to support staffing and operating needs related to admissions, student counseling, student academic advising, financial aid services and career services. The number of budgeted positions critical to supporting these areas has declined by more than 35 percent due to the lack of funding. These positions include Academic Advisors, University Counselors, Financial Aid staff, and Career Development staff, all of which are critical to the mental well-being and academic success of our students. While the number of Admissions Counselors has not changed during this time period, there has been no financial ability to increase the number of positions dedicated to recruitment.

JUSTIFICATION FOR BUDGET REQUEST:

The University is committed to ensuring our students have adequate services to support them academically, mentally, and professionally to not only increase retention, but more importantly, to commit to their future success. Funds will be used to restore Academic Advisor, Counselor, Financial Aid, and Career Development positions to provide superior services to our students and enhance the retention and success of our students. Further, the University has made increasing enrollment and retention efforts a top priority. Funds will also be used to increase Admission recruitment positions.

**FY2023 OPERATIONS AND GRANTS**

**DETAIL OF RESOURCES REQUESTED FOR NEW PROGRAMS**

**AND PROGRAM PRIORITIES**

NAME OF INSTITUTION: Western Illinois University

TITLE OF REQUEST: Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Initiatives

AMOUNT REQUESTED: $1,000,000

SOURCE OF FUNDS REQUESTED: Appropriated Funds

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF REQUEST:

Diversity, equity, and inclusion initiatives are an integral part of the Western Illinois University Strategic Plan and are included within three of the four goals and are also one of six institutional priorities. Our institution actively engages in creating a campus and community cultural environment where all members feel valued, respected and heard. The University celebrates and recognizes the diversity of its campus community with the ultimate goal of creating a university where every faculty, staff, and student member, no matter their background, can excel and realize their full potential. Funding would assist this goal by allowing Western Illinois University to move towards realizing the vision of a highly diverse, inclusive, and welcoming campus and community.

JUSTIFICATION FOR BUDGET REQUEST:

Western Illinois University creates and sustains an inclusive environment across all social identities. Diversity, equity, and inclusion are emphasized, promoted and realized through every office and classroom across the University and surrounding communities. We serve as a resource for and stimulus to educational, cultural, environmental, community and economic development in our region and well beyond it for the public good.

Funds will be used to continue to foster the progression and sustainability of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion and to embrace a culture of understanding, acceptance, and sense of belonging. This will be achieved by allocating additional resources received to initiatives such as:

* organization of new staff and operations
* enabling departments to create courses and participate in research and professional development as it relates to diversity, equity, and inclusion
* improving and developing retention initiatives catered to historically underrepresented groups while providing support to signature and growth programs
* providing emergency financial assistance to high-need, historically underrepresented students to help reduce student financial barriers
* improving and ensuring that the salaries of historically underrepresented groups meet the mean of peer institutions
* reinvesting in areas vital to enrollment, retention, and student success to assist in the development of a College Pipeline program to attract, enroll, support, retain and graduate historically underrepresented students

**FY2023 OPERATIONS AND GRANTS**

**DETAIL OF RESOURCES REQUESTED FOR NEW PROGRAMS**

**AND PROGRAM PRIORITIES**

NAME OF INSTITUTION: Western Illinois University

TITLE OF REQUEST: Student Financial Aid

AMOUNT REQUESTED: $3,000,000

SOURCE OF FUNDS REQUESTED: Appropriated Funds

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF REQUEST:

*Higher Values in Higher Education*, Western Illinois University’s Strategic Plan, states:

“Western Illinois University also emphasizes affordability because a college education is essential in today’s global and highly technological community. We firmly believe that higher education, and the benefits that it accords, is an investment, and that no student should be denied a college education because of financial need. We provide access and affordability to a high-quality educational experience that is responsive to student needs and circumstances.”

Funds are being requested to provide students with financial aid opportunities to support access and affordability to higher education. Over the past several years, Federal and State grant funding has remained fairly constant, while institutional financial aid has increased and at the same time family contributions toward education have declined due to the economy. The result has created a substantial increase in need for financial assistance and has forced needy students to borrow at high levels utilizing federal student loans. Even with higher levels of borrowing, a majority have insufficient funds to pay their college expenses. Providing new and enhanced strategies for reducing the amount of student indebtedness upon graduation is consistent with University’s Strategic Plan, *Higher Values in Higher Education,* and statewide strategic planning goals for higher education, identified in The Illinois Board of Higher Education’s *A Thriving Illinois: Higher Education Paths to Equity, Sustainability and Growth.*

 JUSTIFICATION FOR BUDGET REQUEST:

 As the model behind the state’s Truth in Tuition law, Western Illinois University continues making a strong commitment to ensure that no student is denied access to higher education because of financial need. Funding will be used to provide scholarship dollars to high-need, academically talented students to help reduce student indebtedness upon graduation.  Funding will also allow Western Illinois University to sustain its commitment to offering institutional support to incoming students at a 100% match of the AIM High allocation.

**FY2023 OPERATIONS AND GRANTS**

**DETAIL OF RESOURCES REQUESTED FOR NEW PROGRAMS**

**AND PROGRAM PRIORITIES**

NAME OF INSTITUTION: Western Illinois University

TITLE OF REQUEST: Expanded and New Academic Program Faculty Support

AMOUNT REQUESTED: $1,600,000

SOURCE OF FUNDS REQUESTED: Appropriated Funds

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF REQUEST:

Our first goal in *Higher Values in Higher Education 2017-2027* is to “ENRICH ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE.”  As such, Western Illinois University will continue to recruit, retain, and support high-achieving, diverse world-class faculty and staff members that are second to none. The success of the university is defined by its faculty and staff who engage and transform the lives of their students through their instruction in the classroom or online; who contribute to our society’s larger pursuit of knowledge and truth through their research and creative activities; and who articulate the vision, mission, and values of our institution through their daily service on committees, councils, working groups, and larger community commitments.

In order to remain at the cutting edge of higher education and to continue to provide to our students all of the opportunities a successful higher education experience creates, we must reinvest in programs where the need is great and where we find the foundations in place to grow our institution. Funds are requested to support current programmatic needs necessary to deliver the top tier education our students deserve.  Transformative education is fueled by exceptional faculty who bring expertise into the classroom, labs, and studios, and into our communities.  This request will enable us to hire those faculty and to deliver that special expertise to the students of Western Illinois University.

JUSTIFICATION FOR BUDGET REQUEST:

It is imperative that we provide support to our signature and growth programs as we stabilize and take higher education for the western region of Illinois to the next level of excellence.  We provide a truly transformational higher education for a diverse group of constituents who are the future of our great state.  First generation students are our bedrock.  We are committed to excellence for our students, who deserve nothing short of the best. Put simply, in order to deliver meaningful academic programs to our students we require an increase in our personnel—we need to hire faculty for our expanded and new academic programs.

**FY2023 OPERATIONS AND GRANTS**

**DETAIL OF RESOURCES REQUESTED FOR NEW PROGRAMS**

**AND PROGRAM PRIORITIES**

NAME OF INSTITUTION: Western Illinois University

TITLE OF REQUEST: Quad Cities’ Student Access and Opportunity

AMOUNT REQUESTED: $1,100,000

SOURCE OF FUNDS REQUESTED: Appropriated Funds

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF REQUEST:

The current Western Illinois University-Quad Cities campus opened in 2012 as a commuter campus serving juniors, seniors, and graduate students. The campus has transitioned over the last nine years, based on community demand and employer need, to serve freshmen through doctoral students with over 40 programs of study and a privately-owned apartment complex and corporate headquarters of a credit union located next to the campus.

As a publicly available facility, funds will be used to create and operate critical amenities needed (e.g., internship and career center, bookstore, food service) to support campus growth, community service, economic development, and institutional operations. Western Illinois University received state capital funding to construct and open new Quad Cities facilities in 2012 and 2014, but has not received funding to operate and maintain these facilities during a period of significantly reduced state appropriations.

JUSTIFICATION FOR BUDGET REQUEST:

Illinois public universities are catalysts of community and economic development. Western Illinois University is committed to advancing statewide and the Quad Cities Chamber of Commerce’s top priorities of recruiting and retaining top talent to grow the statewide economy and lowering out-of-state migration rates. Located on the immediate border of Iowa and with seven colleges and universities within 45 minutes, it is imperative that Western Illinois University-Quad Cities have amenities that serve community members, attract students, help them persist to degree, and remain in the region after graduation.

Western Illinois University positions the bi-state Quad Cities area as a destination for quality, applied academic programs that meet the region’s workforce demands through emphasis on practical, hands on experiences, research, workforce preparation, and future employment, all centered on a commitment to promote diversity, equity, and inclusion.

With support from the State of Illinois, the WIU Quad Cities campus will be positioned to expand student success services through career development programming and by forging innovative, strategic connections between WIU students and employers throughout the region. WIU will also expand opportunities for student experiences that promote student access, inclusive campus culture, social connectedness, and applied learning and research experiences on campus and as contributing members of our workforce and community.

The State’s investment in Western Illinois University-Quad Cities growth will have immediate return on investment to state taxpayers. Over 90 percent of WIU-QC graduates stay in the Quad Cities region upon graduation. The Quad Cities region is home to over 150 employers on Forbes Fortune 1000 lists and the Rock Island Arsenal, a major military installation. The region has experienced a 5.2 percent increase in economic strength over the past five years, including $1.5 billion in capital investment and the creation of 4,500 new jobs. The Quad Cities region draws a labor shed of 743,000, with half of workforce age residents (ages 15-64) comprised of Generation Z and Millennials. New initiatives started as a result of this funding will be available to both WIU students and the community at large.

**FY2023 OPERATIONS AND GRANTS**

**DETAIL OF RESOURCES REQUESTED FOR NEW PROGRAMS**

**AND PROGRAM PRIORITIES**

NAME OF INSTITUTION: Western Illinois University

TITLE OF REQUEST: STEM, Regional, and High Demand Degree Programs

AMOUNT REQUESTED: $1,000,000

SOURCE OF FUNDS REQUESTED: Appropriated Funds

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF REQUEST:

To address the projected workforce needs of 1 million additional STEM graduates by 2022, to also address the needs for graduates that would serve our region, and to enhance our other high demand degree programs, Western Illinois University is increasing our investment in these areas of study. This investment moves us towards realizing the vision of a highly diverse, creative, and adequate STEM, Regional, and high demand workforce. These areas are vital to the transformation and future as a country, the future of our region, and the future of our students’ success. Likewise, the United States Department of Labor and the United States Department of Commerce continue to indicate that the demands in these areas are growing at high rate.

The Cyber Security program, housed in the School of Computer Sciences, prepares students to help fill a widening shortfall of cyber security professionals (est. 1.8 million+ by 2022). The program provides opportunities for undergraduate research in numerous methods of digital asset protection, such as real-time media encryption, cloud security, IoT Security, etc. Short-term goals include seeking designation as a National Security Agency Center of Academic Excellence in Cyber Defense Education, creating an online cyber security center for community outreach and dissemination, and seeking funding for the many related objectives of the program. Long-term goals include offering multiple tracks within the cyber security degree program, becoming a significant regional cyber security research center, and furthering the University’s military-friendly image by helping train military affiliated candidates to support and defend the nation against cyber security threats.

Investment in the Emergency Operation Center (EOC) will assist in our ability to provide the technology needed to offer training in Web EOC, GIS, drone surveillance, crime mapping, and disaster programming, assistance, and analysis. These technologies are vital in our educating future professionals in predicting, responding to, and recovering from all forms of ever-growing emergencies and disasters. Not only do these resources promote skills necessary to prepare our graduates for careers in public safety, criminal justice, emergency management, and private security activities, they are also vital in securing continuity of services in times of need. Further, these resources afford us the ability to provide ongoing assistance to professionals in the region and state. Specifically, we have used these skills to support search and rescue operations, to aid first responders during floods, fires, and tornadoes, and to assist local Regional Offices of Education and medical facilities for planning and preparing for this pandemic.

The convergence of disciplines and the cross-collaboration that characterizes contemporary STEM programs, regional program needs and other high demand programs have made collaboration a centerpiece of our current efforts.

JUSTIFICATION FOR BUDGET REQUEST:

Funds will be used to:

* ensure appropriate facilities for engineering labs by renovating existing space, planning future space, identifying equipment operating needs, and identifying off-campus lab opportunities.
* fund operations and purchases of essential software and laboratory equipment to support instruction and to comply with external accreditation requirements and recommendations.
* promote growth in STEM programs, especially engineering and engineering technology, to meet the labor needs of industrial partners.
* update and improve access to existing research facilities in order to support research that can address the challenges of the 21st century.
* enable academic departments, disciplinary and cross-disciplinary units, to create or enhance facilities through the addition or augmentation of technology and cyberinfrastructure, to create environments that enhance research and integrate interdisciplinary research.
* to improve teaching effectiveness and student engagement.

The funds will also be used to provide salaries for additional full-time faculty, and support staff to accommodate the increasing numbers of students in these areas as well as provide for the necessary facilities and equipment improvements.

**FY2023 OPERATIONS AND GRANTS**

**DETAIL OF RESOURCES REQUESTED FOR NEW PROGRAMS**

**AND PROGRAM PRIORITIES**

NAME OF INSTITUTION: Western Illinois University

TITLE OF REQUEST: Permanent Improvements and Campus Infrastructure Enhancements

AMOUNT REQUESTED: $5,500,000

SOURCE OF FUNDS REQUESTED: Appropriated Funds

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF REQUEST:

*Higher Values in Higher Education*, Western Illinois University’s Strategic Plan, states:

“Provide safe, accessible, responsible campus environments that meet the needs of University constituencies and reflect the core values of the University.”

Providing a safe, accessible, and responsive campus environment conducive to learning is crucial in a community of learners. The University estimates a total appropriated deferred maintenance backlog over $500 million. This large backlog of projects is negatively impacting the campus learning environment.

In addition to funds requested for deferred maintenance needs, capital renewal funds are also used to address deferred maintenance priorities on campuses. While some emergency capital renewal funds have been released in recent years the lack of consistent funding has led to the inability to address issues such as elevator maintenance, utility infrastructure repairs, and other critical needs on campus. Deferred maintenance has reached a critical point on campus and it is much more cost effective to maintain needs regularly rather than on an emergency-basis. The reactionary response on an emergency only basis has also led to outages that negatively affect learning and other campus operational activities.

JUSTIFICATION FOR BUDGET REQUEST:

The University is making a strong commitment toward improving the campus physical environment. A reduction in the deferred maintenance liability is viewed as integral to achieving that objective. Funds will be utilized for classroom modernization; improving HVAC and building energy management controls; enhancing electrical and plumbing distribution systems; and renovating campus sidewalks, drives, and exterior stairs.

**FY2023 OPERATIONS AND GRANTS**

**DETAIL OF RESOURCES REQUESTED FOR NEW PROGRAMS**

**AND PROGRAM PRIORITIES**

NAME OF INSTITUTION: Western Illinois University

TITLE OF REQUEST: Restoration of Budget Reductions

AMOUNT REQUESTED: $2,000,000

SOURCE OF FUNDS REQUESTED: Appropriated Funds

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF REQUEST:

*Higher Values in Higher Education*, Western Illinois University’s Strategic Plan, outlines the goals in areas of affordability, student recruitment, employee recruitment, and quality academic programs. The necessary funding from state appropriations and student contributions supports our strategic plan. As the financial support for public higher education in the state of Illinois has continued to erode, the challenges surrounding our goals continue to increase. It is necessary and prudent for the citizens of Illinois to support public higher education with adequate financial support to ensure a well-educated citizenry.

JUSTIFICATION FOR BUDGET REQUEST:

Since fiscal year 2002, Western Illinois University has experienced declining State support. During that time, the appropriation from Illinois has decreased from $64.3 million to $49.6 million. In fiscal year 2016, the university received only 29 percent of a typical appropriation. This drastic swing in support caused the University to make the very difficult but necessary decisions that have affected our current and former employees. Consolidation of critical departments and programs, furloughs, layoffs, and forgoing of salary increases name just a few of the difficult but necessary decisions and measures taken that have affected current and former staff members. The continued erosion of state support causes further pressure on student tuition and other revenue sources. The fiscal year 2022 state budget of $49.6 million is flat with fiscal year 2021 and a 7 percent increase over fiscal year 2018. This is still below the fiscal year 2015 level of $51.4 million. The requested amount represents a restoration to the fiscal year 2015 level.

Western Illinois University has nearly a $600 million economic impact on the state of Illinois. In our 16-county service region we provide quality jobs, we support the local economies, we educate students from all backgrounds and provide much of the intellectual capital for Western Illinois.