



UNIVERSITY SYSTEM TRUSTEES TO MEET SEPTEMBER 10-11 AT UMAINE IN ORONO

BANGOR—University of Maine System trustees will discuss seeking Governor John Baldacci's support for a two-year State appropriations package that emphasizes economic development and college affordability.

Those discussions will take place September 10-11 when the Board meets in Orono at the University of Maine's Buchanan Alumni House. There, Chancellor Terrence J. MacTaggart will present a State budget request that seeks \$14.8 million (8 percent) in additional funding for Fiscal Year 2008, which begins July 1, 2007, and an additional \$21.6 million (11 percent) for FY2009, which start July 1, 2008.

"Those [new] funds would help continue the current level of university operations [and] would complement the cost-containment measures that the university System has adopted," MacTaggart explained.

Under Maine law, the University System and other State-funded departments and agencies must submit a two-year budget request for the Governor to consider. The Governor then determines what funding level to recommend to the Legislature, which actually decides how to appropriate State revenues.

State appropriations, along with student tuition and fees, are the primary sources of funding for Maine's public universities. Board action on tuition and fee rates are determined in the spring, once the Legislature has approved the University System's actual State appropriation for the upcoming budget year.

Along with requested increase in operating funds, MacTaggart will also recommend that trustees seek an additional \$4.3 million per year in State assistance for specific programs related to economic development. Those include:

- expanding the University System's ability to educate more nurses and therefore address a major healthcare concern in Maine
- support for the University of Maine's Graduate School of Biomedical Science, which is closely tied to Maine's rapidly emerging biomedical industry
- helping the University of Maine at Augusta make the transition to a four-year, baccalaureate degree institution, consistent with the recommendations of a State panel on the future of higher education in the Kennebec Valley
- funding for a job-growth initiative designed specifically to meet demand and opportunities in targeted sectors of Maine's economy and geographic regions of the State
- participation as a leading partner in the Maine Department of Education's College Readiness initiative, which is working to increase the number of Maine high school graduates and adult workers who pursue and complete a college degree

In addition, trustees are also expected to seek a \$10 million annual increase in the Maine Economic Improvement Fund (MEIF), which provides seed money and matching funds to help fund university-based research and development. Functioning under the oversight of the University System Board,

MEIF annually helps leverage millions of dollars in federal research funds, averaging about a five-dollar return on every dollar the State invests. In FY05, MEIF-related projects helped create and support over 700 jobs in Maine along with new products, new businesses, and new technologies, according to MacTaggart.

Along with the University System's two-year budget request, trustees will also consider several policy and governance issues at their two-day meeting. Those include:

- a tentative collective bargaining agreement with full-time faculty members;
- the impact of the proposed Taxpayer Bill of Rights on university-related programs, services, and constituencies;
- administrative appointments; and
- financial and facility matters

Established in 1968, the University of Maine System is the state's largest educational entity. It features seven universities -- some with multiple campuses -- located across the state, as well as 11 University College outreach centers and more than 100 interactive distance education sites. For more information, log onto www.maine.edu.

All Board meetings are open to the public. Persons with disabilities who need accommodations to attend should call David Wilson, director of the University System Facilities Office, at 973-3335 (voice) or 973-3262 (TDD/TDY) or by e-mail at dwilson@maine.edu.

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EDITOR'S NOTE: The complete meeting agenda is available at:
http://www.maine.edu/board/meeting_agenda.php.