

NEWS RELEASE

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UI President Supports Proposed Higher Education Budget

URBANA—University of Illinois President B. Joseph White today voiced his support for the proposed fiscal 2008 higher education budget recommended by Gov. Rod Blagojevich.

White made the following statement:

“I support the fiscal year 2008 budget recommendation for public higher education in Illinois and for the University of Illinois.

“The recommended budget reflects that public education at all levels—preschool through secondary, as well as community colleges and four-year universities—is an important priority for the state by investing additional resources in the universities' operational budget for the second consecutive year and by providing much needed capital to maintain our facilities and infrastructure.

“For the University of Illinois, it would mean an additional 1.9 percent, or \$13.3 million, in our operating appropriation, for a total of \$721.5 million, which fundamentally supports our core mission of education, and nearly \$100 million in capital to repair and renovate those facilities that are critical to our academic, research and health care delivery responsibilities. Also, \$119 million in capital projects are proposed for the university through the ‘Opportunity Returns’ economic development program.

“As always, the state's investment in the University of Illinois will be put to efficient, good use in preserving the access to and the excellence on our three campuses that 70,000 students and their families expect and deserve.

“A University of Illinois education is one of the world's great gateways to opportunity and we must keep that gateway open to all we possibly can; this budget helps us do that.

“Providing the necessary resources to adequately fund the state's priorities is the role of

the elected officials in Springfield, and we will leave that responsibility in their hands, standing ready as always to provide the information needed for their deliberations about our appropriation and to share the University's research-based expertise as the state addresses its many challenges.”

The University of Illinois educates 70,000 students on campuses in Urbana-Champaign, Chicago and Springfield, and it has a total operating budget for fiscal 2007 of about \$3.6 billion.

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