



FY 2024

# CAPITAL BUDGET TESTIMONY

## BOWIE STATE UNIVERSITY

### 21<sup>ST</sup> CENTURY FACILITIES SUPPORTING 21<sup>ST</sup> CENTURY TEACHING & LEARNING

Presented by Dr. Aminta H. Breaux, *President*

Senate Budget & Taxation Committee  
Subcommittee on Capital Budget

Senator Craig Zucker, Chair  
March 14, 2023

House Appropriations Committee  
Subcommittee on Capital Budget

Delegate Mark S. Chang, Chair  
March 15, 2023



# BOWIE STATE UNIVERSITY | FY 2024

## CAPITAL BUDGET TESTIMONY

On behalf of the students, faculty and staff of Bowie State University, I am pleased to offer testimony in support of the Governor’s proposed capital budget for FY 2024. I agree with the Department of Legislative Services’ recommendation to approve all authorizations and preauthorizations for Bowie State.

I thank the Governor for including the necessary funds for us to complete construction of our new Communication Arts & Humanities building. This new building will replace the 50-year old Martin Luther King, Jr. Communication Arts facility. I am pleased to report that this project is on schedule. We very much look forward to welcoming students to this new facility in fall 2024.

### MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR. COMMUNICATION ARTS & HUMANITIES BUILDING

Built in 1973 and never renovated, the current MLK building houses our departments of Communications, English & Modern Languages, History & Government and Military Science (our growing ROTC program) and has had structural problems, outdated HVAC and electrical systems as well as ADA accessibility concerns. It is by far our most heavily used academic building — every BSU student must take general education classes held in the facility.

The new building will feature active learning classrooms and collaborative informal student study space. The specialized class laboratories include audio/video editing and demonstration spaces for media production, broadcast/print journalism, public relations, language, literacy and writing as well as history, government, and geographic information systems laboratories. The building will also house the administrative functions of each of the departments with general support space and amenities, as well as dedicated space honoring the legacy of our beloved fallen Bulldog, Lt. Richard Collins, III.



## ENROLLMENT CONTINUES TO GROW

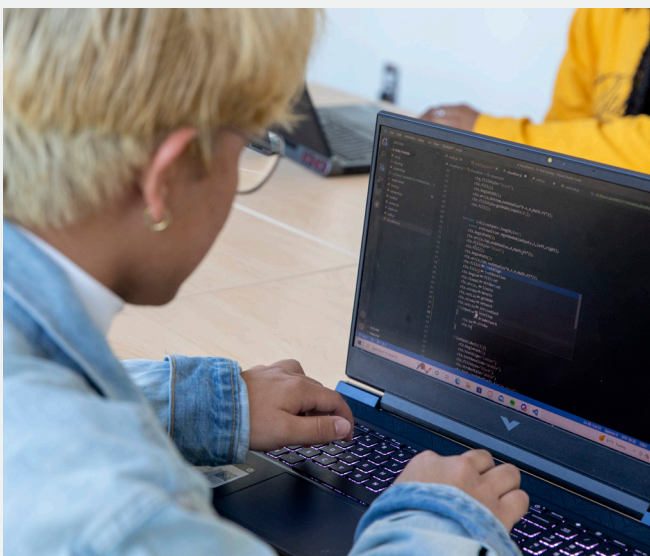
Since 2018, BSU has received on average each year more than 12,000 first-time student applications, an increase of 230% during the time between 2013 through 2017. In spite of downward trends nationwide and the COVID-19 pandemic, enrollment grew by 1.3% between fall 2018 and fall 2022. BSU continues to exceed MHEC projections for degree completion, conferring 850 bachelor's degrees in FY 2022. Since MHEC started projecting completions in 2011, BSU has awarded 9,411 bachelor's degrees, exceeding the MHEC target by 993. The demand for a BSU education remains high.



## INFRASTRUCTURE REQUIRED TO SUPPORT NEW ACADEMIC PROGRAMS

With the infusion of additional operating funds to create new, high-demand academic programs, infrastructure becomes even more critical – they are inextricably linked. Just this year BSU has been approved to offer six (6) new degree programs (B.S. in Philosophy, Politics & Economics; B.S. in Software Engineering; B.S. in Cyber Operations Engineering; M.S. in Applied Biotechnology & Molecular Biology;

B.S. in Data Science; M.S. in Internet of Things & Internet Technologies), with nine additional programs currently under review by USM and/or MHEC, and many more in the pipeline. We are committed to meeting the state's workforce needs and diversifying our enrollment. While we are very grateful for the operating funds to launch these new programs with enhanced marketing, additional scholarships and faculty, the unfortunate reality is that our current infrastructure does not adequately support our growth. The most glaring example of this is the current Thurgood Marshall Library.



## NEW LIBRARY/ ACADEMIC COMMONS

BSU's updated Master Plan informs our capital priorities. Our major priority is replacement of the woefully out-of-date Thurgood Marshall Library. Built in 1977, this 166,869 square foot facility is the largest building on campus. With the exception of computer labs added in 1996, many of the essential library spaces have never been renovated. Instead, we have invested significant Facility Renewal funds to simply maintain the building which, over time, has become home to a variety of unrelated administrative offices for which there was no other space on campus. The facility simply has not kept pace with

the technological and programmatic demands of a modern academic library.

The proposed new Academic Commons project would replace the existing library which originally was considered for renovation in the Facilities Master Plan. After further study, as clearly outlined in the Part I Program, renovation is not technically or financially feasible. The new proposed project complies with current state guidelines and addresses all the deficiencies identified in the existing library. The project is a high priority for the University and is critical for our continued growth. We need to begin work on the construction of the new library project soon after the new MLK Communication Arts & Humanities building is completed.



Existing library



Proposed Academic Commons project

Thank you for your continued support for the Martin Luther King, Jr. Communication Arts and Humanities building. I urge your serious consideration for accelerating our new library project in the CIP, with planning funds in FY 2024.