

2010

Mickey L. Burnim, President

BUDGET TESTIMONY

BOWIE STATE UNIVERSITY



**HOUSE APPROPRIATIONS SUBCOMMITTEE ON EDUCATION
AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**

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**SENATE BUDGET & TAXATION SUBCOMMITTEE ON HEALTH,
EDUCATION AND HUMAN RESOURCES**

February 18, 2010

**BOWIE STATE UNIVERSITY – 2010 OPERATING BUDGET
TESTIMONY
MICKEY L. BURNIM, PRESIDENT**

Introduction

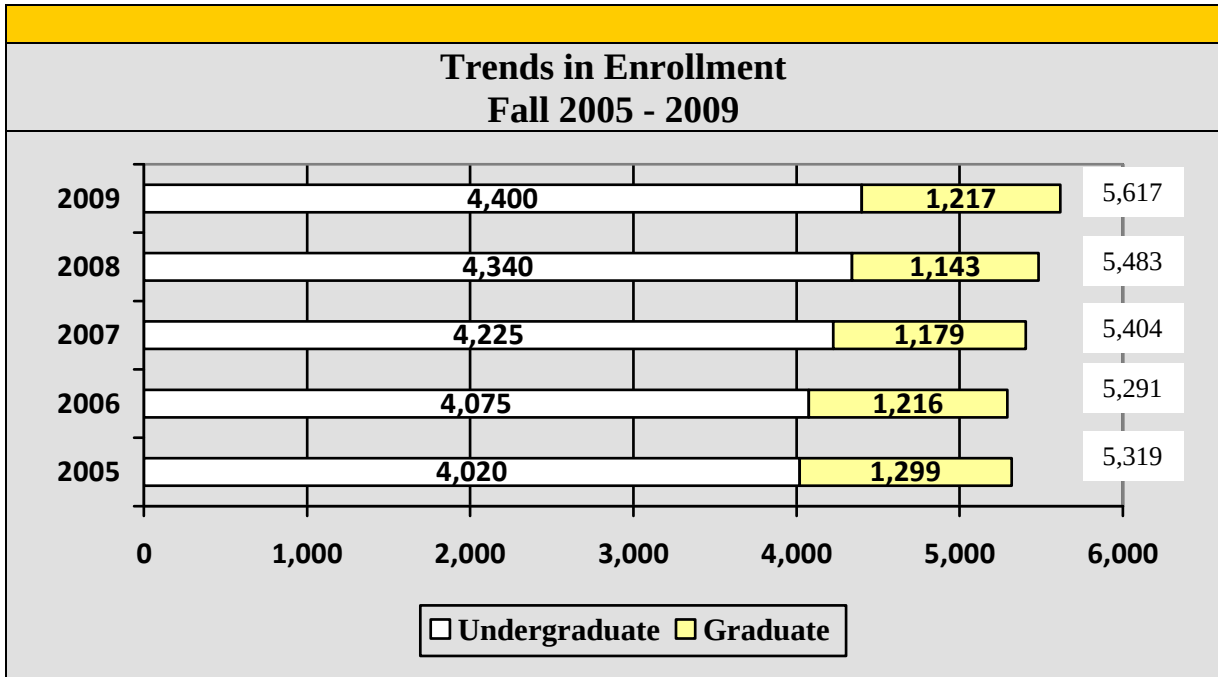
Good afternoon, Mr. Chairman and members of the subcommittee. On behalf of the students, faculty, administration and staff of Bowie State University, I am pleased to have this opportunity to testify in support of the Governor's proposed budget for FY 2011. I appreciate the strong support that the Governor and members of the General Assembly have shown for education generally, and higher education in particular. Your commitment -- in the face of extraordinarily difficult fiscal challenges -- is what has enabled Marylanders to enjoy first-rate public schools and affordable, accessible, high-quality postsecondary education. I thank you for that commitment and for the investments in higher education.

As with all campuses within the University System of Maryland, and state agencies alike, Bowie State absorbed its share of cuts to our FY 2010 operating budget. Reductions in our general fund, together with reductions in our fund balance, and furloughs total nearly \$4 million. We are managing those cuts while remaining focused on our priorities of improving graduation rates, improving academic programs and promoting growth. Our mandatory furlough plan was designed with the goals of minimizing the economic impact on our lowest paid employees and maintaining core student services. And while the furloughs have not been easy, I am thankful that we have not yet had to lay off a single employee.

We are quite grateful for the four consecutive years in which we were able to avoid raising our in-state undergraduate tuition. As you know, access is such a critical component of our mission at Bowie State. We work very hard to ensure that qualified students have every opportunity to matriculate and earn a degree. Given the fiscal situation our state faces, however, we understand that an increase in tuition was inevitable. We are committed to doing all we can to minimize the impact of any tuition increase on our neediest students.

Managing our Growth

We are excited to have been designated as a “growth institution” by the University System of Maryland and, although the budgetary constraints have limited funding to support our growth, I continue to believe that the future of Bowie State depends upon our ability to attract new students and to retain our students through graduation. With a headcount of 5,617 this past fall 2009, Bowie State University’s enrollment is the highest in its history.



Our recent growth is due largely to our increased focus on retention. We are promoting more tutoring and advising services; extending service hours to better serve students; and promoting greater awareness of financial aid opportunities. We also established, through the Bowie State University Foundation, an “Enrollment and Retention Emergency Fund,” to help students at risk of dropping out, or “stopping out.” We retained about 20 students with the help of this fund. Several of these students were in their final semester.

Reinstituting winter commencement has helped us move students more quickly through matriculation in support of our priority of raising graduation rates. Our efforts are paying off, as indicated in the most recent numbers. BSU's six year graduation rate as reported by MHEC has increased from 41.1 (1998 cohort) to 45.0 (2002 Cohort).

As we continue implementing our Achievement Gap Plan, we will look more closely at the advising function on our campus. We have had success in retaining students from their first to second year, due in part to intensive advising we provide for our freshmen and sophomores. We want to apply the same level of “high-touch” advising to all our

students to ensure they are on track to graduate in six years or less. I have made increasing our graduation rates our highest campus-wide priority. Each department on campus is looking for ways to promote student success.

We are also taking a critical look at our academic programs – and the modes of delivery - in an effort to ensure that we offer relevant, high-quality programs that are attractive to a diverse population of learners. We are currently updating our strategic plan and developing a new academic plan and enrollment management plan with these important goals in mind.



State-of-the-art facilities are also important for our continued growth. This past fall we were delighted to be able to break ground on a new Fine and Performing Arts Building. This \$70

million, 123, 000-square-foot facility will include a 400-seat main theatre, 200-seat black box theater, 200-seat recital hall, art gallery, classrooms, laboratories and offices. With your continued support, we look forward to opening this building in the fall 2011.



Enhancing the Workforce

We remain committed to contributing to Maryland's workforce. Our efforts include more focus on the **STEM** disciplines (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics) where we have capacity to grow. Led by our College of Arts and Sciences, the university is promoting greater participation in the STEM disciplines by our faculty and students. Efforts include supporting more faculty development, infusing more research into the curriculum, and engaging middle and high school students through pre-college experiences.



We launched a new Bachelor of Science degree in **bioinformatics**, a multi-disciplinary program focused on the application of information and mathematical sciences to the understanding of biology. With the support from a \$140,000 grant from the Maryland Higher Education Commission, our School of Business is developing an innovative new concentration in the Master of Science in Management Information Systems program in **information assurance** that will include 18 courses, to be offered beginning in late

spring. We are having discussions with federal agencies about offering these classes to their staff.

We successfully launched a Principals' Institute, supported by \$192,000 in federal funds. The institute features an 18-month curriculum with Saturday classes to help prepare Prince George's County school administrators for certification as elementary, middle and high school principals.

The University is collaborating with the Prince George's County Public School System (PGCPS) on a Minority Nurses Pipeline project, also supported by federal funds. Activities include: establishing nursing clubs in middle schools (3 middle schools to date); providing tutors to 50 high school student interested in nursing; mentoring 12th grade pre-professional nursing students; developing a transitional summer enrichment program between high school graduation; developing college and collaborative curriculum and instructional delivery between Bowie and PGCPS.

Connecting with the Community

As we prepare our students for life, we emphasize the importance of community involvement. Our students continue to rise to this challenge in the most rewarding ways. Last year, for example, accounting majors helped over 50 low-income residents of Bowie and surrounding communities complete their federal tax returns.



The University hosted Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission's Bowie Marc Sector Planning project, a yearlong process that included community forums and briefing sessions on our campus. The process culminated in a preliminary plan for developing the area surrounding Bowie State University. Visual communications and digital arts student Samantha Key won the design contest for the cover of the Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission's Bowie Marc Station Sector Plan.

Recently, we signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the City of Bowie to locate a Business Incubator on our campus. This exciting partnership will create opportunities for our students and faculty to help local start-up companies.



As part of our efforts to raise awareness among middle and early high school students about college readiness, we launched ***RU READY***, an online, interactive game that also serves as a recruitment tool.

Meeting the Fiscal Challenges



The downturn in the economy has had an impact on fundraising. The impact is particularly challenging for our institution as we only recently began to focus on institutional advancement efforts in a comprehensive way, building the necessary infrastructure to launch and sustain a serious campaign. We have made tremendous progress, launching our first ever comprehensive campaign last year: ***The Campaign for Bowie State University – Believe Invest Grow.***

The “BIG Campaign” has helped us create the “enrollment and retention emergency fund” I mentioned earlier. This fund provides scholarship dollars to students in need that might not otherwise be able to enroll or would have to consider “stopping” or “dropping” out.

While we depend on state support to fulfill our mission, we also recognize that fiscal realities require us to seek additional funding from other sources. This has become a major priority for us. We have substantially increased the number of grant proposals submitted to external agencies by increasing the number of faculty submitting proposals. We have seen good results. In FY 2009, Bowie was awarded over \$14 million in extramural funding – double what we were awarded in FY 2008. We will continue this effort by offering training and support to faculty looking to pursue grant opportunities.

Inspiring Excellence

We continue to strive for excellence in teaching and learning, athletics and in leadership and stewardship. We celebrate students like Tamisha Carmichael, a working mother whose husband was deployed to Iraq when she graduated with a perfect 4.0 grade point average. Tamisha, who gave birth to her second child three weeks before commencement, was featured in the *Washington Post*.



Four Bowie State students were among 60 students selected nationally to participate in the prestigious U.S. State Department Internship Fellows Program last summer. The students were mentored by senior Foreign Service official and encouraged to pursue careers as in the Foreign Service. We are extremely proud of these students.



We graduated over 900 students last year with baccalaureate, master's and doctoral degrees in 49 academic programs. Each year

we see more and more examples of outstanding student achievement.

Our College of Business earned a 10-year re-accreditation by the Association of Collegiate Business Schools and Programs, and our nursing department's baccalaureate program received accreditation for 2009-2015 from the National League of Nursing and Accrediting Commission. We also successfully completed the process for re-accreditation of our social work program. These successful efforts reflect our faculty's strong commitment to excellence in teaching at the undergraduate and graduate level.

The University received a 2009 Council for Advancement and Support of Education (CASE) WealthEngine Award for Educational Fundraising. The award honors superior fundraising programs across the United States. CASE selected Bowie State because of overall improvement in its fundraising program based on the judges' analysis of three years of fundraising data submitted to the Council for Aid to Education's annual Voluntary Support of Education Survey. Bowie State is among more than 3,400 educational institutions that CASE represents and among only a few of its kind to receive the award. The University was extremely proud to receive this honor. We have worked hard to build the infrastructure to support fundraising, and this recognition is a validation of the substantial strides we have made in this critical area.

We were also proud to be recognized by the Governor's Office for Minority Affairs for exceeding the state's minority business enterprise goal. Bowie State awarded 31.78% of our contracts to minority- and women-owned businesses in 2009 and we co-hosted the Lt. Governor and congressional leaders in a minority business and procurement symposium on our campus. We remain committed in excellence in our procurement practices.

Three members of our staff received "Best in Track" awards from the Thurgood Marshall College Fund (TMCf) in 2009 for outstanding financial aid management; outstanding leadership in public relations; and outstanding performance as a TMCf coordinator. These efforts are reflection of the high quality administrators and staff we try to recruit and retain.

Faculty member Bradford Braden earned his second patent for outstanding research, and alumnus William Thomas was named **Maryland Teacher of the Year**.

Our student athletes continue to excel. The men's cross-country track team captured the Central Inter-collegiate Athletic Association (CIAA) championship and our softball team won its 3rd consecutive CIAA championship.



Caring for the Environment



The Bowie State University community is deeply concerned about the unprecedented scale and speed of global warming and its potential for large-scale, adverse health, social, economic and ecological effects. We recognize the scientific consensus that global warming is real and is primarily caused by humans. We are committed to doing our part to reduce the worst impacts of global warming and to help reestablish the more stable climatic conditions that have made human progress over the last 10,000 years possible.

I established the Climate Commitment Control Committee (C4) to coordinate the development of a comprehensive plan to achieve climate neutrality at BSU by 2020. The C4 team is comprised of faculty, students and staff who are working to keep the University community engaged in this important campus-wide effort. Some of our accomplishments include:

- Establishing an annual Earth Day Program that focused on new GREEN initiatives to help further educate the Bowie State campus community.
- Completing ahead of schedule the first Carbon Footprint Inventory of the campus. The inventory will help us measure the amount of carbon emissions produced and assist the University in its efforts to alleviate carbon emissions throughout campus.
- Completing the institutional Climate Action Plan pursuant to the American College and University Presidents' Climate Commitment which I signed two years ago. This plan is a major step forward in our efforts to address global climate change and sustainability.
- Establishing a recycling program in all academic buildings and several auxiliary buildings with commingle recycling bins placed throughout our buildings.



We participated in *RecycleMania*, a national recycling competition. Our students collected over 21,000 pounds of recyclables during this competition. I am especially proud that our students are committed to this effort.

Conclusion

Bowie State University is celebrating 145 years of providing quality education in Maryland. Our students, faculty, alumni, administration and staff have a very strong legacy upon which to reflect. As we look ahead, however, we are mindful of the challenges we face.



We are all concerned about the fiscal outlook for our state and the impact that additional budget cuts would have on our ability to meet our core mission – teaching and serving our students. We see ourselves as part of the solution for turning around Maryland's economy. State funding is crucial to our efforts to provide access for qualified students seeking to earn a college degree and contribute to the workforce. At the same time, we recognize that we must continue to look for ways to generate funding from private sources and grants, and be good stewards of our resources.

We have worked hard to build a strong team of academic and administrative leaders to help move the University forward. State support is critical to our success. I respectfully ask the Subcommittee to approve the Governor's proposed budget for USM. I look forward to answering your questions.

Bowie State University
Responses to Issues Raised by Department of Legislative Services
FY 2011 Budget

Bowie State University opposes DLS' recommendation to reduce the fund balance of the USM by \$3.8M related to the HEIF shortfall in FY 2010. We are very concerned about the impact of further reductions to our fund balance. We have already reduced our fund balance by over \$2 million in order to absorb cuts to our operating budget and we agree that further draw-downs could jeopardize the System's credit rating. Bowie State also opposes the recommendation to not reauthorize the HEIF. We strongly support the idea of a dedicated funding stream for higher education to help us maintain access and affordability, particularly at a time when the demand for higher education by Marylanders is high. We urge the Subcommittee to reject these recommendations.

1. The President should comment the efforts being taken to improve retention in light of current budget constraints.

Even in the face of budget constraints, improving retention and graduation rates remains a top priority for Bowie State. Therefore, we have employed a variety of strategies. First, as we allocate institutional aid, we shifted our focus to increase and target disbursements to returning students and we made allocations for graduating seniors a priority. We strengthened academic advising for first and second year students through our Academic Advisement Center. Our University Relations and Marketing department helped us to enhance communications and outreach to our students so that we provide more timely information regarding academic programs, class schedules and important deadlines. We also enhanced our website and updated our student information system to better communicate academic, personal and vocational support services.

There are, however, certain measures that we have not been able to undertake. For example, I am convinced that we need to have in place retention specialists for each academic department, or at least one in each of our four colleges. Moreover, we know that we could maximize our retention efforts by leveraging the use of more technology, and so we have explored the idea of an "intrusive" early warning tracking system to help us intervene more quickly when students show signs of academic trouble. These measures are consistent with best practices. We have not been able to implement them because of budget cuts.

2. The President should comment on the funding source of the nursing initiatives that were reduced and on whether any Nurse Support Program II funded activities were affected by the reduction.

State general funds which supported the nursing program were cut in FY 2010. However, no grant related activities including the Nursing Support Program II

(through MHEC) were affected by the reduction. Nursing Support Program II funds are being used for a Nursing Fellowship Program (FY 2010 - \$30,000), the Faculty Nursing Pipeline Initiative (FY 2010 - \$160,005), and the Accelerated BSN with Retention and Success Initiative (FY 2010 - \$348,436).

3. The President should comment on whether BSU has raised sufficient qualified PDIP funds to reach the maximum by the January 1, 2010 deadline.

Our records show that \$1.5 million in cash and pledges was raised in support of the match. Pledges totaling \$300 thousand were not fulfilled, as scheduled, before the deadline.

4. The President should comment on the reduction of need-based financial aid in fiscal 2010 and on the decision to level-fund institutional aid despite an expected 3% increase in undergraduate resident tuition. The President should also comment on this action's expected impact on retention and graduation rates, particularly since BSU identifies increasing need-based aid as a key part of the university's improved retention efforts.

Although the University reduced its undergraduate need-based institutional financial aid by approximately \$50,000 for FY 2010, we were still able to assist needy students. As was described in the written testimony, we established an emergency fund through the Bowie State University Foundation with the goal of helping students at risk of dropping out or stopping out. We used funds from this source to help many students, some of whom were within a semester or two of graduating.

It should also be noted that many of our students who receive other institutional scholarships are in fact students with financial need. General scholarship funds from the Central Intercollegiate Athletic Association (CIAA) are used primarily to meet the financial needs of our graduating and returning students. These CIAA funds have been a key part of our strategy to improve retention and raise our graduation rates. We anticipate a positive impact on retention and graduation rates as a result of our strategic re-allocation of institutional need-based financial aid.

5. The President should comment on how these existing programs have been enhanced using guidance provided by the MHEC-HBI report to improve graduation and retention among underprepared students.

We have been engaged in a number of the best practices outlined in the MHEC report for some years. Our ability to enhance these efforts is limited by the funding available. With respect to Supplemental Instruction specifically, the English Department is utilizing the Nelson-Denny standardized test, which measures vocabulary, comprehension and reading rate, to group similar students together in developmental sections. This enables more targeted instructional strategies. Tutorial labs expanded hours into the evening to accommodate working students.

6. **The President should comment on how increased retention will impact the effort to keep fiscal 2011 enrollment level, and on the number of first-year students the university will be able to admit in fall 2010 as a result. The President should also comment on the changes to the Satisfactory Academic Progress requirements and its impact on retention. Finally, the President should address the decline in graduate student enrollment from fall 2000 to 2008.**

Our fall 2009 enrollment of 5,617 students represents a 3 percent increase in returning undergraduate students and a 6 percent increase in returning graduate students. We anticipate that these retention gains would continue to keep our FY 2011 enrollment level. New student freshman enrollment projections should remain similar to that for the previous fall with approximately 700 new freshmen. We expect to continue to see slight increases in new transfer students (450) and graduate students (300) as a result of a deliberate focus to grow these populations.

The changes in the Satisfactory Academic Progress requirements will help us identify students who are at risk academically. Those students who are on academic probation will be linked with appropriate student support services to assist them in regaining good academic standing. Those students who receive financial aid will increase their chances of maintaining their financial aid with the recent implementation of the new Satisfactory Academic Progress requirements for financial aid recipients. We now require a 67 percent course completion rate as opposed to the previous 81 percent course completion requirement. For those students who are academically suspended, the University will maintain contact with them and help them in developing plans that will allow them to not only be successful in regaining entry into the University, but also successfully matriculate and obtain their degree.

We were pleased to be able to reverse the decline in graduate enrollment for fall 2009. It makes sense for us to grow our graduate enrollment because we are not dependent upon the construction of new residence halls to accommodate these students. The fall 2008 semester saw the largest class of new graduate students enroll at the University. The fall 2009 graduate enrollment included a 6 percent increase in returning graduate students as compared to the previous year. As a result of a combination of new and returning students, our graduate enrollment increased from 1,143 in fall 2008 to 1,217 for fall 2009. We continue to aggressively to recruit and enroll new students through our open houses. We produced a prospective graduate student newsletter and a new graduate catalog and handbook. We were also able to expand our graduate assistantship program.