



REMARKS

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**BUDGET REVIEW SUBCOMMITTEE ON EDUCATION
OF THE
HOUSE APPROPRIATIONS AND REVENUE COMMITTEE**

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REMARKS
JOANNE K. GLASSER
HOUSE APPROPRIATIONS
AND REVENUE SUBCOMMITTEE
ON EDUCATION
FEB. 17, 2004, 1 P.M.

GOOD AFTERNOON! AND THANK YOU VERY MUCH FOR THIS OPPORTUNITY TO DISCUSS THE FUTURE OF KENTUCKY!

YES, THE ISSUE OF FUNDING FOR POSTSECONDARY EDUCATION IS MUCH BIGGER THAN JOANNE GLASSER OR ANY ONE OF US ... IT'S MUCH BIGGER THAN EASTERN KENTUCKY UNIVERSITY OR ANY ONE OF OUR INSTITUTIONS. REALLY AND TRULY, IT'S EVEN BIGGER THAN ALL OF OUR INSTITUTIONS PUT TOGETHER!

THIS IS ABOUT KENTUCKY ... IT'S ABOUT THE QUALITY OF LIFE WE ALL HOLD SO DEAR ... IT'S ABOUT OUR FUTURE ... OUR CHILDREN ... OUR GRANDCHILDREN.

MOST OF YOU ARE LIFELONG KENTUCKIANS ... SO I KNOW THESE ARE ISSUES YOU CARE ABOUT, TOO ... AND CARE ABOUT DEEPLY OR YOU WOULDN'T BE HERE.

I ALSO KNOW YOU CARE ABOUT THE QUALITY OF HIGHER EDUCATION IN KENTUCKY. IT'S YOUR CONTINUING SUPPORT AND YOUR VISION THAT HAS ENABLED US TO MAKE SUCH POSITIVE STRIDES IN RECENT YEARS.

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN, I WANT YOU TO KNOW THAT ALL YOUR HARD WORK IS ALREADY PAYING TREMENDOUS DIVIDENDS AND IS POSITIONING KENTUCKY AND ITS CITIZENS FOR AN ENRICHED QUALITY OF LIFE FOR YEARS TO COME.

BECAUSE YOU ARE GOOD STEWARDS OF TAXPAYER DOLLARS, YOU WILL BE PLEASED TO KNOW THAT COLLEGE ENROLLMENT IS UP NOT JUST AT E-K-U, BUT ALL AROUND OUR COMMONWEALTH ... MORE AND MORE KENTUCKIANS ARE TAKING ADVANTAGE OF QUALITY HIGHER EDUCATION THAT IS BOTH AFFORDABLE AND ACCESSIBLE. I'M SURE YOU WOULD JOIN ME IN SAYING THIS IS A MOST WELCOME TREND.

BUT THIS GROWTH IS A TWO-EDGED SWORD BECAUSE IT COMES AT A TIME WHEN A NATIONWIDE ECONOMIC SLUMP THREATENS OUR ABILITY TO SERVE THIS INCREASED NUMBER OF STUDENTS.

AND – MAKE NO MISTAKE ABOUT IT – OUR COLLECTIVE ABILITY TO SERVE OUR STUDENTS WHILE KEEPING COSTS WITHIN THEIR REACH WILL GO A LONG WAY TOWARD DETERMINING THE FUTURE COURSE OF OUR COMMONWEALTH AND THE QUALITY OF LIFE FOR HER CITIZENS.

CERTAINLY, AN EDUCATED CITIZENRY IS THE SINGLE BIGGEST FACTOR IN THE GROWTH AND VITALITY OF KENTUCKY AND THE KEY TO THE ENRICHED QUALITY OF LIFE WE ALL DESIRE.

THE QUALITY OF LIVES IN MY COMMUNITY AND IN THE COMMUNITIES YOU SERVE DEPENDS HEAVILY UPON ALL THE GOOD WORK THAT IS TAKING PLACE AT ALL THE CAMPUSES AND OUTREACH CENTERS OF PUBLIC HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS AROUND KENTUCKY.

IN FACT, THE LINK BETWEEN POSTSECONDARY EDUCATION AND QUALITY OF LIFE HAS NEVER BEEN CLEARER!

AN EXCELLENT, WELL-FUNDED POST-SECONDARY EDUCATION SYSTEM MEANS THAT OUR HEALTH CARE NETWORK WILL ALWAYS HAVE AN AMPLE SUPPLY OF WELL-TRAINED DOCTORS, NURSES AND OTHER HEALTH PROFESSIONALS.

AN EXCELLENT, WELL-FUNDED POST-SECONDARY EDUCATION SYSTEM MEANS THERE WILL ALWAYS BE WELL-PREPARED CLASSROOM TEACHERS FOR OUR CHILDREN AND OUR GRANDCHILDREN IN K-THROUGH-12 SCHOOLS ... AND THAT THE EDUCATIONAL REFORMS THAT HAVE BROUGHT SO MUCH POSITIVE ATTENTION TO KENTUCKY WOULD CONTINUE.

AN EXCELLENT, WELL-FUNDED POSTSECONDARY EDUCATION SYSTEM MEANS OUR EXISTING INDUSTRIES HAVE A RELIABLE PARTNER FOR EMPLOYEES, WORKFORCE TRAINING AND SPECIALIZED ASSISTANCE ... AND THAT COMMUNITIES CAN TRANSFORM THEMSELVES WITH THE KIND OF HIGH-QUALITY, HIGH-PAYING JOBS THAT KENTUCKIANS NEED AND DESERVE.

I KNOW ALL OF YOU ARE CONCERNED ABOUT ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT IN YOUR DISTRICTS ... AND IT ALL STARTS WITH EDUCATION.

A STRONG SYSTEM OF COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES WOULD ENCOURAGE OUR BEST AND BRIGHTEST YOUNG PEOPLE. TO OBTAIN THEIR COLLEGE EDUCATION KENTUCKY AND GIVE THEM HOPE THAT JOBS WOULD AWAIT THEM HERE WHEN THEY GRADUATE.

THE LATE, GREAT FOLKSINGER WOODY GUTHRIE ONCE SAID THAT HE WANTED TO BE KNOWN AS SOMEONE WHO TOLD FOLKS WHAT THEY ALREADY KNEW. AND MAYBE THAT'S MY ROLE HERE THIS AFTERNOON ... JUST TO REIMPRESS UPON YOU WHAT YOU ALREADY KNOW IN YOUR HEART ... THAT POSTSECONDARY EDUCATION IS INTERTWINED WITH ANY QUALITY-OF-LIFE ISSUE WE COULD NAME.

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN, IF WE DON'T MAKE AN INVESTMENT IN OUR COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES TODAY, THE PRICE DOWN THE ROAD WILL BE MUCH GREATER.

AS YOU KNOW, E-K-U SERVES SOME OF THE POOREST COUNTIES IN THE NATION, LET ALONE KENTUCKY. BUT THESE ARE KENTUCKIANS WHO ARE RICH IN SPIRIT ... WHO WANT AND NEED ONLY AN OPPORTUNITY FOR A BETTER LIFE FOR THEIR CHILDREN AND GRANDCHILDREN. YOUR LEADERSHIP CAN CONTINUE TO GIVE THEM HOPE THAT THEY CAN TURN THEIR DREAMS INTO REALITIES.

I COULD GO DOWN THE LIST OF THE MEMBERS OF OUR HALL OF DISTINGUISHED ALUMNI AND TELL YOU STORY AFTER STORY ABOUT MEN AND WOMEN WHO ROSE FROM ECONOMICALLY DISADVANTAGED SURROUNDINGS TO THE PINNACLE OF THEIR PROFESSIONS. MANY OF MY COLLEAGUES HERE COULD DO THE SAME. ALL THESE MEN AND WOMEN NEEDED WAS AN OPPORTUNITY ... AND HOPE.

AND THAT BRINGS ME TO THE MATTER OF TUITION. AT A TIME WHEN MORE AND MORE KENTUCKIANS ARE GETTING EXCITED ABOUT A COLLEGE EDUCATION, WE MUST KEEP THOSE DOORS OF OPPORTUNITY OPEN.

THAT'S WHY THE TOUGHEST DECISION OF MY PRESIDENCY CAME LAST DECEMBER, WHEN I RECOMMENDED TO OUR BOARD A ONE-TIME SURCHARGE OF \$100 ON ALL OUR FULL-TIME IN-STATE STUDENTS AND \$200 ON ALL OUR FULL-TIME OUT-OF-STATE STUDENTS.

THIS WAS NOT AN EASY DECISION, BUT WE HAD NO ALTERNATIVE WITHOUT COMPROMISING OUR ACADEMIC INTEGRITY.

BUT LET'S NOT KID OURSELVES. PERMANENT TUITION INCREASES IN DOUBLE DIGIT PERCENTAGES CAN'T BE FAR BEHIND IF WE HOPE TO PROVIDE THE QUALITY OF ACADEMIC PROGRAMS AND SERVICES THAT OUR STUDENTS DESERVE.

I FELT A WIDE RANGE OF EMOTIONS AS I WATCHED THE STUDENT RALLY HERE AT THE CAPITOL LAST THURSDAY. I'M ALWAYS HAPPY TO SEE YOUNG PEOPLE TAKE SUCH AN INTEREST IN THE AFFAIRS OF OUR STATE ... BUT IT SADDENS ME WHEN THEY'RE HURTING. AND THEY'RE HURTING RIGHT NOW ... AND THEY'RE WORRIED ABOUT WHAT THE FUTURE HOLDS. YOUR SUPPORT FOR EXCELLENT FUNDING FOR HIGHER EDUCATION WILL RESTORE THEIR HOPE.

E-K-U HAS RESPONDED TO FOUR BUDGET CUTS IN TWO YEARS BY TIGHTENING OUR BELTS ... BY HOLDING SOME POSITIONS OPEN OR ELIMINATING THEM ALTOGETHER ... BY REDUCING OVERTIME AND TRAVEL EXPENSES ... DEFERRING MAINTENANCE ... DELAYING SOME PROJECTS ... AND, AS I MENTIONED A MINUTE AGO, BY PASSING ALONG SOME OF THE COST TO OUR STUDENTS.

BY THE TIME WE LEARNED LAST MONTH OUR SHARE OF THE CUT IN STATE APPROPRIATIONS, WE WERE WELL ON OUR WAY TO IDENTIFYING AREAS IN OUR BUDGET WHERE WE COULD COMPENSATE FOR THAT REDUCTION.

WE ARE WILLING TO SACRIFICE OUR SHARE TO ALLOW THE STATE TO LIVE WITHIN ITS MEANS ... BUT I WANT YOU KNOW THAT THESE SACRIFICES HAVE REAL CONSEQUENCES.

MOST OF US ARE DEALING WITH AGING INFRASTRUCTURE ON OUR CAMPUSES THAT NEEDS IMMEDIATE ATTENTION. FURTHER DETERIORATION ONLY MEANS UNPLANNED INTERRUPTIONS AND HIGHER REPAIR OR REPLACEMENT COSTS DOWN THE ROAD.

JUST LIKE ANY BUSINESS OR INDUSTRY, WE ALSO DEAL WITH FIXED INCREASES SUCH AS HEALTH INSURANCE AND EMPLOYEE BENEFITS.

MY PLEDGE TO YOU AND TO KENTUCKY TAXPAYERS IS THAT WE WILL CONTINUALLY EVALUATE OUR BUSINESS PRACTICES TO OPERATE MORE EFFECTIVELY AND EFFICIENTLY ... WE WILL CONTINUE TO AGGRESSIVELY PURSUE ALL SOURCES OF REVENUE FROM OUTSIDE SOURCES ... WE WILL CONTINUE TO COOPERATE IN EVERY WAY POSSIBLE WITH OUR UNIVERSITY PARTNERS AND WITH THE K-C-T-C-S TO REDUCE DUPLICATION AND BETTER MEET THE EDUCATIONAL AND WORKFORCE TRAINING NEEDS OF KENTUCKIANS.

IN CLOSING, I THINK IT WOULD SERVE US WELL TO LOOK BACK BEFORE WE LOOK FORWARD.

LET US LOOK BACK AND REMEMBER A TIME WHEN KENTUCKY RANKED AT OR VERY NEAR THE BOTTOM IN SO MANY EDUCATIONAL CATEGORIES

...

LET US LOOK BACK AND REMEMBER WHEN POSTSECONDARY EDUCATION WAS AN AFTERTHOUGHT IN THE HEARTS AND MINDS OF TOO MANY KENTUCKIANS.

THANKS IN NO SMALL MEASURE TO THE VISION AND PERSEVERANCE OF LEADERS LIKE YOURSELVES, THOSE ARE FLEETING MEMORIES OF A PAST THAT IS DEAD AND, HOPEFULLY, BURIED.

KENTUCKY IS GAINING RESPECT NATIONWIDE FOR ITS COMMITMENT TO POSTSECONDARY EDUCATION REFORM ... AND, NOT COINCIDENTALLY, SUPPORT FOR POSTSECONDARY EDUCATION ALL ACROSS KENTUCKY IS RISING ALONG WITH ENROLLMENT AT ALL OUR INSTITUTIONS.

SO LET US LOOK FORWARD NOW TO THE DAY WHEN ANY KENTUCKIAN WHO DESIRES A COLLEGE EDUCATION CAN REALIZE HIS OR HER DREAM OF A BETTER LIFE ...

LET US LOOK FORWARD TO THE DAY WHEN INDUSTRIES THINK FIRST OF KENTUCKY BECAUSE OF OUR STRONG COMMITMENT TO EDUCATION AT ALL LEVELS ...

AND LET US LOOK FORWARD TO THE DAY WHEN KENTUCKY IS A SHINING EXAMPLE TO THE REST OF THE NATION BECAUSE, IN A TIME OF GREAT ADVERSITY, IT REFUSED TO RETREAT.

I'LL CLOSE WITH THE WORDS OF FORMER PRIZEFIGHTER "GENTLEMAN" JIM CORBETT, WHO ONCE SAID, "YOU BECOME A CHAMPION BY FIGHTING ONE MORE ROUND."

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN, OUR FIGHT IS NOT WITH ONE ANOTHER ... OUR FIGHT IS NOT WITH THE GOVERNOR OR WITH THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY ... OUR FIGHT IS FOR THE VERY FUTURE OF KENTUCKY.

WORKING TOGETHER, WE MUST – AND WE WILL – WIN THAT BATTLE.

THANK YOU.