

Many Millersville University students, faculty and staff have asked for guidance on how to discuss the proposed 2011-12 Commonwealth budget impact on PASSHE, state-owned universities, and Millersville with their legislators and other government officials. We offer the following points for as you communicate with Commonwealth representatives. We also urge that all conversations be civil in tone. If you decide to make comments, put your comments in writing and in your own words so that legislators are not receiving the same message from constituents who are questioning the severity of the Governor's proposed cuts.

Talking Points

- The governor's proposed cuts to public higher education are the deepest being proposed among all the states in the country. If the 50% reduction survives the legislative process, the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania will reduce its already shrinking support to about 19% of Millersville University's General & Educational budget.
- Everyone understands that the Commonwealth's budget must be reduced, but the potential decrease in funding and offsetting tuition increases are both untenable. The legislature needs to fund higher education's appropriation so that the PASSHE Board of Governors can keep tuition increases to around \$500 a semester.
- Millersville University has been a careful and responsible steward of the funds it receives in state appropriations and through tuition revenue. Tuition increases at Millersville have averaged 4.3% over the past ten years. At the same time, the University has cut \$11.6 million from its budget over the last three years.
- Today's fiscal realities warrant a willingness to find cost savings through operating more efficiently, in addition to drastic budget cuts. Becoming more effective and efficient might include a commitment to longer-term budget and tuition planning, and more flexibility in the areas of procurement and construction
- Pennsylvania is in jeopardy of having its citizens at risk with regard to affordable and quality public higher education. If our citizens are at risk, this impacts not only the Commonwealth but our nation as well. An under-educated Pennsylvania is not the way to grow out of the current budget deficit that confronts the Commonwealth or any other state.
- Undermining support for public higher education could seriously affect Millersville University's \$500 million annual economic impact on Lancaster County and the region, and poses a threat to the Commonwealth's return on investment in this area.