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Sent: Wednesday, May 25, 2011 4:09 PM
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Cc: Berg, Brad [BOARD]; Brunson, Marcia R [BOARD]; Clayton, Aimee [BOARD]; Cook, Timothy B [BOARD]; Evans, Thomas A [BOARD]; Gonzalez, Diana [BOARD]; McCarthy, Ann M [GOV R]; Murphy, Joseph D [BOARD]; Racki, Joan [BOARD]; Saunders, Keith [BOARD]; Sayre, Patrice [BOARD]; Smith, Dianne [BOARD]
Subject: Response to DSM Register Article
Attachments: DMR Tuition Story Response.pdf

Regents,

Attached is a response prepared by the Board Office to Sunday's Des Moines Register article, "Runaway Tuition." The state relations officers have shared this document with key legislators and legislative representatives of our campus communities.

Please contact us if you have any questions. Thank you.

Sheila

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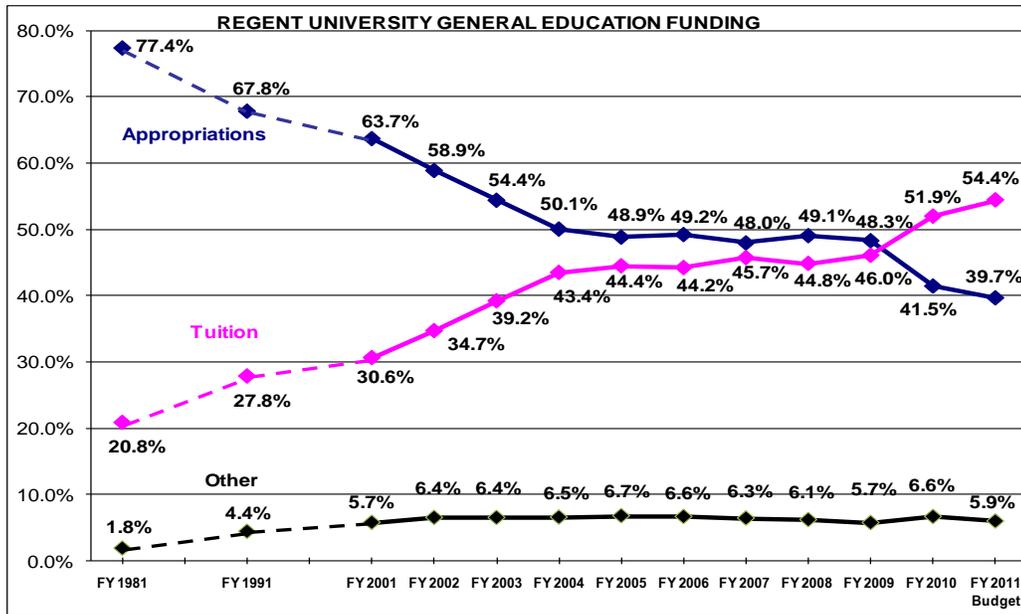
Board of Regents Response to Des Moines Register Article Regarding Tuition

The Sunday, May 22, 2011 Des Moines Register is incorrect in its conclusion that the universities are pocketing millions in excess tuition income. There is no such thing as “extra” tuition, nor do Iowa’s public universities “pocket” tuition revenues.

Enrollment at all three universities is up. With additional students come additional costs. Something the Register article failed to address. The additional tuition revenue generated by the universities’ success in growing enrollments is directly invested to meet the additional expenses associated with educating a larger number of students (additional faculty, teaching assistants, advising and counseling services, teaching supplies, increased tutoring, supplemental instruction, technology needs, and other student services). Tuition revenues are also used to control class sizes to support and maintain quality instruction and invest in ongoing and new student success initiatives (i.e., living-learning communities, technology in the classrooms, etc.) that are paying off in increased student performance and retention.

The Board of Regents has worked very hard in recent years, in spite of serious budget cuts, to ensure that tuition increases are as low as possible. For the next academic year, the Board has approved a 5% tuition increase. Because we have held the line on tuition increases, Iowa’s public universities deliver an outstanding higher education at a bargain price. Only one institution in the University of Iowa’s 11 member peer group charges less in tuition. The same is true for Iowa State. Only two of the University of Northern Iowa’s 10 peers charge lower tuition. At 17.8% of per capita income, tuition and fees at UI, ISU and UNI remain affordable for hard-working Iowans. Tuition and fees at our peer institutions cost on average 23.3% of per capita income in their states. Nationally 19.4% of per capita income goes to tuition and fees.

We should also remember that when it comes to resident undergraduates, tuition alone does not cover the full cost of educating students at Iowa’s public universities. For decades Iowans have invested in educating our young people by covering a portion of the costs of their education through state appropriations. But the state’s share has been falling for years, declining from 77% of general education funding in 1981 to only 40% today. In fact, a significant contributor to the rate of increase in tuition at the Regent universities has been declining investment by the state. As the Register article noted, over the past decade the state has increased spending on other government services 28 percent, while cutting appropriations to Iowa’s public universities 24 percent. Just since FY2009 state support for educating our students has been reduced \$118 million.



With this background, it is a mistake to characterize our modest success in generating more tuition than our conservative budgeting practices initially forecast as “excess” tuition. We are proud that our universities are experiencing record enrollments. That students – including many from out-of-state who pay much higher tuition levels than lowans – continue to flock to ISU, UI and UNI, is a testament to the quality and affordability of Iowa’s outstanding public universities. The Register article does our universities a disservice when they describe increased tuition revenues from additional student enrollments as being “pocketed” and ignore the need to invest these dollars in educating those very same students.