



HOUSE APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE

February 22, 2012, 9:00 a.m.

**Statement by Robert R. Jennings, Ed.D.
President, Lincoln University**

Thank you for the opportunity to provide information and to answer your questions about Lincoln University and our 2012-2013 Operational Budget Request from the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania.

Lincoln University has completed its 157th year as the nation's first historically Black chartered university. We have provided you with information that illustrates and justifies our need for continued support as we play a major role in helping the Commonwealth to distinguish itself as a leader in education. The partnership that we have with the Commonwealth is crucial in sustaining our ability to provide quality instruction, student assistance and technology innovation; all necessary ingredients in assuring that Lincoln graduates are highly competitive in the global marketplace.

As many of you know, I began my tenure as the 13th President on January 2, 2012. Within a few days I was informed that our 2011-12 allocation was being cut by \$558,000. This was certainly not the way I wanted to start this experience. Over the past seven weeks, it has become very apparent that the 5% reduction in our 2011-2012 appropriation presents the University with some very critical issues. As you will see from our 2012-2013 Operational Budget Request, Lincoln University needs and is requesting \$26,000,000 to advance the goals we have set for the institution; goals that are part of our strategic plan.

Even if Lincoln's level of appropriation for 2012-2013 is to remain the same as the previous year, the University will be forced to increase tuition and fees again by as much as \$750 per student. This may seem like a small amount but the majority of Lincoln's students are first-generation college entrants, many of whom are from single family homes. Our fall 2011 enrollment shows that 95% of Lincoln students are receiving some form of financial assistance, with 70% being Pell Grant eligible. Even the slightest increase in tuition will prove to be insurmountable for many of the students we serve, causing a marked decrease in the number of enrollees. For Lincoln, whose primary revenue source is heavily dependent on its enrollment numbers, a decrease in the number of students will most assuredly have a devastating impact on our operations.

Competition to attract the best and brightest students is universal among colleges and universities. While the University has increased its admissions standards and is seeking to enroll students with a 900+ SAT score, 80 points above the Pennsylvania Black American average, the institution remains committed to a well-rounded student body and is seeking to have two-thirds of its students who are academically talented and gifted while the remaining one-third will be those who may need some extra assistance and extension in acquiring the skills and competencies needed to work and survive in the Commonwealth and the wider global society.

Lincoln's 2011-2012 operating budget included \$4,526,120 in scholarship dollars. Every penny of those dollars was used to assist our students to meet their financial obligations and/or remain in school. With the anticipated increase in tuition, we need to be able to provide this same level or more in scholarship assistance in 2012-2013 if we are to remain competitive and accessible to those we serve.

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Lincoln University is a major player in the Commonwealth. Sixty-five percent of our student body comes from Pennsylvania and with 575 employees; the University is one of the largest employers in southern Chester County, making us a major contributor in sustaining the County and ultimately the State. Our records also show that 54% of the University's graduates remain in the Commonwealth. Thus, any decrease in State support would mean a reduction in scholarship support which is critical and in many cases would be a major factor in whether our students are able to enroll or remain at the University. A decrease in our allocation would also require the implementation of budget cuts and layoffs of faculty and staff.

Although the University has contained costs, reduced expenses and frozen positions and non-essential travel, the increase in utilities, property and health insurance has impacted the budget in ways unimaginable. The support of the Commonwealth will help the institution stay afloat during this period of financial austerity. While we desperately need the \$26 million that we have requested, the same level of funding that we received in 2011-12 will enable us to continue offering quality programs and services, provide scholarship support in recruiting some of the best and brightest the state or nation has to offer, and provide jobs that will enable the citizens of this state, especially those in southern Chester County, to remain contributing members of society.

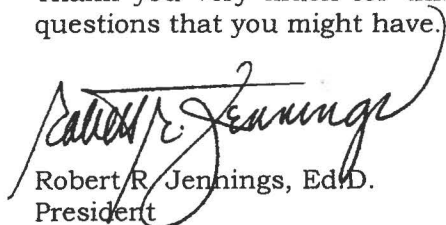
We also need your support so that we can provide competitive salaries to maintain a quality faculty. Currently 77% of Lincoln's faculty holds terminal degrees and 54% have earned tenure. The ability to maintain quality faculty, especially in the competitive disciplines, is seriously hampered by the limited availability of fiscal resources to provide competitive salaries.

In 2001-02 the Commonwealth's appropriation was \$12,553,000, representing 33% of the University's Operating budget. Ten years later, despite the rising cost of living and the rising cost of providing a quality and relevant education to our student population, our 2011-12 State appropriation was \$11,163,000 or 17% of our budget. Of specific note this is more than a \$2.5 million reduction in State support from 2010-2011 to 2011-2012. While we recognize the State's revenues are not as any of us would like, we respectfully submit that we simply cannot afford any further reduction in support from the Commonwealth. We would ask that you recognize and appreciate the unique and important role that Lincoln University has played as we begin our 158th year as part of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania.

In Lincoln University's formal submission, which you have before you, we are seeking \$26,000,000 in funding to support three basic areas: *Educational and General, Technology*, and five designated areas of *Academic Excellence*. Each area of excellence identified in our request include those disciplines where minorities are underrepresented as graduates; namely, science, technology, engineering, mathematics, teacher education, mass communications, business including accounting and finance and the arts.

As we strengthen our efforts to identify, cultivate and solicit private sector support, which has been reduced nationwide, we pray that our economy will rebound and that you will help us to remain a viable contributor to the Commonwealth.

Thank you very much for this opportunity and for your support. I am available to answer any questions that you might have.)



Robert R. Jennings, Ed.D.
President