

House Appropriations Committee
10.30 am Thursday, Feb. 13

((The House Committee is allowing a brief opening statement by each President.))

Thank you Mr. Chairman. It is an honor to be with you today.

As you know, I've been the 10th President of Temple University for slightly more than a year. Last October, I outlined a vision for Temple. I would like to briefly review the priorities I've set for the university.

First is a commitment to affordability. Temple is committed to access, and bold, innovative strategies to reduce student debt. Just last week, we announced our **Fly in 4** initiative, designed to focus students on graduating in four years, so they can hold down their debt and more quickly enter the job market. At the same time, we have also taken bold action on limiting tuition increases. Over the last two years, Temple's **base tuition has gone up an average 1.5 percent**.

Second is our **commitment to the city of Philadelphia**. Temple has extraordinary **intellectual resources**, and we will work to tackle the toughest challenges facing urban communities. Our first engagement will be in public education.

Our third commitment is to telling the Temple story. As state elected officials, you have every right to **be proud of Temple University** and my goal is to make sure everyone knows **how good a Temple education really is**.

Fourth is a commitment to diversity. Homogeneity is a death sentence in the modern world. Temple is proud to be **one of the nation's most diverse universities**, with a student body that represents the ethnicities, languages, religions and cultures of the world.

The fifth commitment is to **research that changes people's lives**. Our research will explore what can be done to improve the everyday experiences of Pennsylvanians so they can live **healthier, more productive lives**.

Finally, I am committed to **extending entrepreneurship and innovation across the university**. Being "real-world ready" means providing opportunities across all disciplines to foster student entrepreneurship and innovation, so that **Temple students will create their own success regardless of economic conditions**.

That is the vision I outlined for **your public research university in Southeastern Pennsylvania**. We are making good progress on these initiatives, and I am happy to discuss this vision with you in greater depth this morning.

Thank you.