

**Statement by Richard A. Green, Ph.D.  
Interim President, Lincoln University**

House Appropriations Committee  
March 2, 2016 – 1:00 p.m.

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Good morning, Chairman Adolph and members of the House Appropriations Committee. Thank you for the opportunity to provide an opening statement in support of Lincoln's 2016-2017 operating budget request.

Lincoln University has proudly celebrated more than 161 years as the first four-year degree granting HBCU in the nation. From its very inception, Lincoln University has graduated excellent students who have made exemplary contributions to the state of Pennsylvania, the nation and the world. Our students and our graduates have taken advantage of the opportunity to pursue a higher education at Lincoln when, historically, such opportunities were not widely available to our sons and daughters and grandsons and granddaughters of African American descent. From its founding in 1854 Lincoln has been an attractive place to study, not only for citizens of Pennsylvania, but for students from neighboring states and from around the world. We are equally proud that in 2016, we serve a diverse student population. With our largest number of students coming from Pennsylvania, our student body represents more than 30 states and 17 foreign nations.

The University is committed to providing the talent pool -- especially minority graduates -- necessary to maintain the economic vitality of the Commonwealth. As noted in materials provided to you earlier, 54% of Lincoln's graduates remain in the State of Pennsylvania. Additionally, the University employs more than 400 people, making it among the top 30 largest employers and a major contributor in sustaining the economy of southern Chester County.

U.S. World News & World Report ranked Lincoln 17<sup>th</sup> among the 117 HBCUs in 2014 and 21<sup>st</sup> among HBCUs in 2015. The University prides itself on having one of the highest retention rates among schools of its size. Lincoln has earned national distinction of graduating a significant number of Black Americans in the sciences, recording a yearly average of 20% undergraduate degrees in the sciences.

Lincoln University has weathered the budget storms of the past and is facing one of its biggest challenges with the current budget situation. Over the immediate past five years, while experiencing a reduction in enrollment (thus a reduction in tuition revenue) and fluctuating and reduced funding from the State, we had to take significant cost reduction measures which included:

- Reduction of low enrolled academic programs
- Reduction of faculty and staff – Early Retirement Incentive Program for faculty
- No increase in administrative salaries over the past six years
- Several other cost saving measures

Even in the face of such challenges, we responded to the Commonwealth's call to maintain tuition costs at a minimum for our students. Thus in 2014-2015 Lincoln University instituted a tuition freeze to maintain a student's tuition at the same level for a four-year period. This amounted to a combined cost savings of \$78,912 in 2015-2016 for those students who entered in

the fall of 2014. That savings will increase over the next years as these students matriculate at Lincoln. This is significant because the majority of our students are first-generation college entrants, many of whom are from single family homes.

In preparing the 2016-2017 State Budget request, we took a close look at the 2014-15 and 2015-16 requests. The five years prior to 2015-2016 Lincoln University experienced enrollment declines and fluctuations/declines in support from the State. From 2011 to 2014 enrollment fell from 2,000 to 1,800. After implementing an aggressive enrollment management strategy, our 2015 enrollment increased to 1,902, a 4% overall increase with 30% in first year students. Preliminary numbers indicate a trending up in admissions which we are hopeful will result in an even larger enrollment for fall 2016.

As our efficiencies and cost savings report indicates, we have made significant adjustments to maintain effective and efficient University operations with the resources available to us. Our 2016-2017 Budget request reflects a desire to recover revenues lost over time and an attempt to ensure that the University remains on track to provide high quality educational programs and instructional resources. This will insure that our students receive the best possible education to prepare them to be strong contributors who will positively impact the State of Pennsylvania and the world.

Lincoln is committed to access, affordability, and academic excellence. Our undergraduate and graduate students are strong academically, possess technological awareness and have a special appreciation for social and global awareness. The continuance of Lincoln's commitment to access and affordability requires a commitment from the Commonwealth to support the University's mission. While we have contained costs for our students, and continue to attract more students to our institution, it is becoming more difficult to sustain these efforts and enhance our program offerings at the current momentum. For that reason, we are requesting a significant increase, over prior years, in Lincoln University's 2016-17 appropriation.

In 2014-15 we received funding of \$13,163,000 and an increase to \$14,084,000 was expected in 2015-16. Our 2016-17 request was prepared after careful consideration of our program needs, expected tuition revenue and the University's continuing significant contributions as partners in the quest for a better State of Pennsylvania. Lincoln University is requesting a 2016-17 State appropriation of \$26,000,000. However, we do understand the difficulty of the decisions with which you are faced and request that you will at least support a budget that will provide an increase over the \$14, 084,000 for which we budgeted this year. Your support will help us to make sure we meet the needs of our students and make increasingly significant contributions to the Commonwealth's growth and development.

We at Lincoln University live out our mission with clarity and expressed quality. Please do not hesitate to contact me for additional information.

Thank you.

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