

1ST DISTRICT  
**LAWRENCE M. FARNESE, JR.**  
SENATE BOX 203001  
THE STATE CAPITOL  
HARRISBURG, PA 17120-3001  
TELEPHONE: 717-787-5662  
FAX: 717-787-4531

1802 SOUTH BROAD STREET  
PHILADELPHIA, PA 19145  
TELEPHONE: 215-952-3121  
FAX: 215-952-3155

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POLICY



**Senate of Pennsylvania**

January 17, 2012

The Honorable Jake Corman  
Majority Chairman, Senate Appropriations Committee  
281 Main Capitol Building  
Harrisburg, PA 17120

Dear Senator Corman:

I am writing to voice my concern regarding the Senate Appropriations Committee annually-scheduled budget hearings, in particular regarding a notable omission.

In reviewing the budget hearing schedule received on January 9, 2012, I did not see a time for the state-related universities to come in to testify about their budget needs for the upcoming fiscal year. This is concerning and leads me to wonder: why have they been omitted from the Appropriations Committee budget hearings schedule?

First, in the current fiscal year 2011-2012, the four state-relateds received state funding in excess of \$500 M. The total funding appropriated to these institutions is higher than all other agencies, with the exceptions of the Treasury Department, the Department of Public Welfare, the Department of Corrections and the remainder of funding falling under the Department of Education. Based on cost to the Commonwealth alone, we should have them in to speak to the committee.

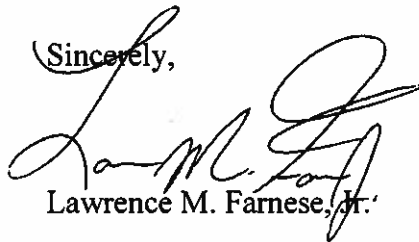
Second, the funding mechanisms for the state-related institutions are the only non-preferred appropriations in recent existence, which require a two-thirds majority vote in order to enact. With a super-majority of members having to vote in the affirmative on their funding, it is even more imperative to have them appear before the Senate Appropriations Committee to publicly enumerate their funding needs.

Third, with the cost of education rising each year, Pennsylvania's students are bearing the brunt of increased tuition expenses. We, as a committee, should be given an opportunity to publicly question these institutions of higher education to ensure that our students are not bearing exorbitant cost increases in a time when so many are already economically burdened.

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I ask you to consider the points above and schedule an Appropriations Committee budget hearing for the state-related universities. I appreciate you taking the time to thoughtfully address my concerns. I look forward to hearing from you regarding the issues raised and my request moving forward.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Lawrence M. Farnese, Jr.", written in a cursive style.

Lawrence M. Farnese, Jr.