

TO: The Eastern Kentucky University Faculty Senate  
FROM: Senator Michael T. Benson  
DATE: April 4, 2014  
RE: April Campus Report

### **Legislative Session**

As I summarized in the note to campus last week, the end of the legislative session marked some significant appropriations and approvals for our campus. Sincere thanks go to all those who supported our lobbying efforts and exercised their First Amendment rights on our behalf (see my most recent Huffington Post blog [http://www.huffingtonpost.com/michael-benson/a-redress-of-grievances\\_b\\_4932228.html](http://www.huffingtonpost.com/michael-benson/a-redress-of-grievances_b_4932228.html)).

Even though all public higher education institutions will face a 1.5% reduction in our operating expenses, significant capital investments were made by the Commonwealth (over \$540 million) as each campus received funding for its number one priority.

In summary, we received:

- \$66.3 million for completion of Phase II of our Science Building
- \$2 million for capital investments into our aviation program
- \$ 136 million in operating funds (for the biennium)
- \$75 million approval for a potential P3 (Public-Private-Partnership) for University Housing
- \$15 million for agency bonds to expand and renovate our athletics facilities

### **Funding Model Discussion**

On Tuesday of last week, I attended a CPE-sponsored discussion on the possibility of developing a new funding model for higher education institutions in Kentucky. Presentations were made by those who had helped shape such policies in Tennessee and Indiana and a “working group” has been established to continue this dialogue. As opposed to a model driven primarily by enrollments, the majority of states across America are leaning toward “outcomes-based” policies where a whole host of factors are considered and weighted (e.g., degrees completed, research and grant funding, student transfers, degrees per 100 FTE, graduation rates, etc.). Folks from our campus will be active participants in these discussions moving forward.

### **Campus Forum on Athletics**

Last Thursday, we held a campus forum on athletics. It was well-attended and resulted in a good discussion. Both the video of the presentation as well as the powerpoint I used for my remarks are available: <http://president.eku.edu/campus-updates>

Thanks for your continued service to EKU and our students.