



Public Comment May 3, 2024

1. Andy Royston (on behalf of the UCFC and the UC caucus): Faculty - Submitted written comment
Topic: Penn State leadership's 2025/2026 fiscal year budget plan

April 26, 2024

Dear Trustees,

The January 2024 unveiling of Penn State leadership's 2025/2026 fiscal year budget plan has caused considerable apprehension and distress throughout the 14 campuses that comprise the University College. Despite leadership messaging that "we have 18 months to figure things out," faculty, staff, and students are well-aware that cuts of the magnitude proposed – \$54 million (14.1%) from the previous year's allocation to the Office of the Vice President of Commonwealth Campuses (OVPC) – could only be obtained through aggressive and extensive faculty and staff terminations at many or most University College campuses.

Although the severity of the 2025/2026 budget plan is intended to solve problems driven by challenging financial exigencies, we believe that neither the solutions it proposes nor the newly forged budget model from which it is derived provide a promising or acceptable "roadmap" for Penn State's future. The implausibly compressed timeframe in which campuses would be required to make major fiscal determinations in order to meet the July 1, 2025 implementation deadline would force insufficiently deliberated organizational decisions. We fear that actions taken in haste will imperil the University College's capacity to continue serving as a foundation of Penn State's commitment to its Land-grant mission.

The current budget model unfairly undervalues how our faculty activity is credited, disregards the necessity of both reduced tuition and geographic proximity to ensuring access and affordability for under-served PA residents (and in fact punishes the campuses for serving our land-grant mission), ignores the fact that University College campuses serve higher percentages of first-generation students and students who stay in PA after graduation, and minimizes the importance of our students and our academic communities within the Penn State system. Furthermore, these flaws in the budget model would be amplified by the FAFSA debacle that is predicted to disproportionately affect lower-income households and result in lower enrollments across the U.S., not just the University College.

Therefore we call on you to reject the proposed cuts to the OVPC 25/26 budget and to direct President

Bendapudi, Dr. DelliCarpini, and Penn State leadership to replace the proposal with a reasonable, multi-year initiative to give all vital stakeholders the opportunity to engage in developing a comprehensive plan and vision for the future of the University College and Penn State.

Jointly endorsed and signed with unanimous support by the University College Faculty Council (UCFC) and the University College Caucus of the University Faculty Senate.

Sincerely,
UCFC and UC Caucus

2. Garrett Roen: Staff; Alumni - Submitted written comment

Topic: Cuts to the Commonwealth Campuses

I am writing as both a current staff and a former alumnus of Penn State DuBois about the impending massive cuts to the Commonwealth Campuses for fiscal year 2026. I believe strongly in the campus system and urge the Board to reject any budget which gets balanced upon the backs of our most vulnerable citizens and employees. The campuses in rural areas specifically are not designed to run as money generating entities, we're here to serve the land-grant mission of this University. Many of the students at DuBois would never attend a larger campus such as Altoona, Erie, or University Park if it weren't for the access we provide in our area.

DuBois, and all the campuses in the Commonwealth system have value which FAR exceed the dollars and cents of a nebulous budget model which combines Student Credit Hours and Headcount (why? When one is small, they're both small and when one is large, they're both large). At the very least you should look at all the students our campus serves. This spring the DuBois headcount is in the low 300s but we serve close to 500 students through multi-campus registrations and shared courses through the DLC. I realize that's still smaller than a single class in the Forum Building at UP but we're doing the University's mission, we're serving the students of the Commonwealth, and in many cases, we're helping University Park students graduate on time.

I have worked for the University for 20 years, 18 of which have been at DuBois. In that time DuBois experienced both booms and busts in enrollment and every time we've tried to do things to grow, University Park has said no. We've asked for a Nursing degree, UP said no. We've asked for housing to increase our ability to get students from out of the area, UP said no. We've asked for a 4-year Wildlife degree to complement our highly enrolled 2-year Wildlife Technology degree, UP said no. Just to name a few. Now University Park is asking us why we haven't done anything to increase enrollment when it's been them who kept us from growing. It is the equivalent of your older sibling smacking you with your own hands saying, "Why are you hitting yourself?" We've tried, for decades to no avail to grow and the decision makers have failed us and now throw campuses like ours under the bus.

I urge the Board to take into consideration that cuts to the Commonwealth Campuses is only harming the most vulnerable citizens of Pennsylvania in some of the most deprived areas in the state. What we do here matters, who we educate matters, and how we better our communities' matters. Don't punish us for decisions made outside of our control.

3. Douglas Starr: Faculty - Submitted written comment

Topic: Commonwealth campuses

Without providing an inordinate subsidy for any commonwealth campus, consider their existence a continuous student pipeline to main campus, an opportunity to provide a Penn State education to commuting students, and an investment for future giving via alumni support.

4. Gib Prettyman: Faculty - Submitted written comment

Topic: upcoming budget decision

Dear Board of Trustees,

Once again, and with ever greater concern, the Faculty Senate of Penn State Fayette, The Eberly Campus urges you to reject the proposed FY2026 budget containing massive cuts to the University College budget. The cuts are too hasty and should be rejected until careful strategic planning can clearly and specifically identify the intended outcomes.

The cuts are too hasty because we suddenly have an interim Provost and therefore lack established academic leadership to guide us forward in academically sound and strategically consistent ways.

The cuts are too hasty because the planned Academic Program and Portfolio Review process is far behind its promised schedule, and to date no campus faculty have even begun to be included in the process. Passing a budget that necessitates program cuts without a clear academic and economic strategy would be unprofessional.

The cuts are too hasty because they would force campuses to slash faculty and staff without any existing map of the desired educational outcomes. Passing a budget that necessitates massive personnel cuts without a clear and strategic understanding of intended outcomes would be unethical treatment of employees and irresponsible stewardship of invaluable campus resources.

The cuts are too hasty because they rely on a new budget model that raises significant concerns and confusion. Recently, university academic leadership was informed of a major mistake in accounting for Student Credit Hours (SCH) that missed 5 million dollars of University College income. Passing a budget based on unclear accounting of uncertain data would be unwise.

The cuts are too hasty because you are now two months away from considering a budget that has zero information about how the funds will be spent by the University College. The spring semester is ending and still we have absolutely no specifics about what the reorganized Commonwealth Campuses would look like, much less any details about academic programs and student support services at individual locations. There are also no details about how the College plans to meet its legally mandated responsibilities (FERPA protections, ADA compliance, police services and record keeping, security clearances) or maintain program accreditations. Passing a budget with completely unspecified details would be dangerous.

We grant that significant changes may be needed to make the University College nimbler and more responsive to the educational needs of the state. However, the envisioned timeline for the administration's "roadmap" has proven to be grossly unrealistic, and so we urge you to reject the planned cuts to the FY2026 budget.

(Submitted with unanimous support by the Fayette Faculty Senate)

5. Mary Vollero: Faculty - Submitted written comment

Topic: Plans to Balance the Budget

Dear Penn State Board of Trustees,

Thank you for inviting our letters. I write today with great respect for your commitment and your sincere efforts to steer Penn State to a prosperous future. That said, I suggest a course correction might be advantageous for Penn State.

Having been at Penn State for most of my life, first as a student, then staff, and now as a faculty member, I have seen many ups and downs. Sadly though, I have never seen Penn State's moral lower. Even during the regrettable Sandusky era, we joined together as proud Penn Stater's against the darkness. Then during covid, we rose to the challenge to provide the safest and most effective education possible for our students. Regretfully though, this year's proposed budget cuts have created a very heavy, negative atmosphere, especially at our Commonwealth Campuses. Faculty and staff feel unappreciated and defeated. Penn State's leadership appears callous to how these budget cuts will affect employees, students, and the communities it serves. I fear many of our best people are deciding to leave, rather than wade through these rough waters, or worse--face the chopping block.

I fear the negativity is not confined to meeting rooms across Penn State campuses, but news about the budget cuts has caused students to feel unsettled and parents to consider other options in their communities which appear more secure. Penn State's reputation is further damaged by cuts to WPSU, an outreach mission that makes a real difference to people across the State. I think Penn State would benefit by pledging to increase support for public TV and Radio, rather than by cutting support, now.

The demands placed on the President Bendapudi and her team to balance the budget by 2026, seem too much, too fast. Rather than demand a balanced budget that relies on cuts, Penn State might benefit more by pledging to invest in areas with potential to grow. We need to find ways to sure-up our outreach, to grow the campuses -not to cut them.

We at the campuses acknowledge there are budgetary challenges. But we believe we could meet the challenges and even exceed expectations. With more support, we could create a more sustainable future going forward. The campuses themselves have many creative ideas on how to grow, but support has often been limited. If smaller campuses had dormitories, we would certainly increase our enrollments. If tuition were lowered at our campuses, if more grants and scholarships were made available, our enrollments would certainly increase. And yes, by combining campuses, we could save on administrative costs and increase program and degree offerings. All these ideas require more investment, not less.

May we always remember, WE ARE PENN STATE, one University built upon a land-grant mission of education, research, and extension. Though we have over twenty campuses, WE ARE ONE UNIVERSITY committed to meet people where they are, around the world and across our great state. Please support our campuses, and in turn, support the people of Penn State and Pennsylvania.

6. Brad Klauss: Alumni - Submitted written comment

Topic: BMET Program

Hello,

I am the Manager of the Clinical Engineering Department at West Penn Hospital, part of the Allegheny Health Network, and a former graduate of the BMET program. I would like it to be known how crucial the BMET program is to every healthcare system in Western PA. This program is a lifeline for ALL local hospitals. BMET graduates are an integral part of every health system in this area, and none of the local hospitals could meet their regulatory requirements or ensure patient safety without these graduates. This program consistently graduates intelligent, knowledgeable students, who have no issue stepping right into the field. There is nothing else like this in the area. Staffing in this field is a struggle and will be extraordinarily difficult if this program were to go away.

7. Noah Durso: Current Student - Submitted written comment

Topic: Budget Cuts

The budget model should not be coming before the strategy...

8. Nathan French: Alumni; Current Student - Submitted written comment

Topic: BET Program

The PSNK BET program is a one of a kind. It is nationally recognized in the biomedical engineering field as one of the top programs in America and one of the few accredited programs in the U.S. In a healthcare rich city like Pittsburgh, the BET program at PSNK is and has been for decades, the largest supplier of medical equipment technicians for our area and beyond. I moved from Northwest Ohio to this area in 2014 to attend the BET program at PSNK. For me, this program was the start of a "real" career. I graduated from the program a month and half before I turned 30 years old and it has been a huge part in paving the path to my career. The importance of this BET program to Western PA and especially the city of Pittsburgh is great, and in my opinion, would change the trajectory of the region's healthcare industry if it were to be closed.

9. David Whiteman: Alumni - Submitted written comment

Topic: PSNK - BET Program

To Whom It May Concern:

It has come to my attention that the BET Program at PSNK may soon be discontinued due to budget constraints. Working in healthcare, I am well aware of the current financial challenges that many industries are facing; my employer, UPMC, just exercised the largest volume of staff layoffs in their history. What may not be common knowledge is that the Healthcare Technology Management industry, for which the BET Program educates students to enter into, has a very high median employee age with retirement volume expected to far outpace new professionals entering the HTM field. UPMC, AHN, and other Western PA healthcare providers HEAVILY rely on PSNK to be an incubator of new HTM employees for our industry. I implore those tasked with making the difficult decisions to cut or retain educational programs at PSU to retain the BET Program. It is essential to Western PA's healthcare facilities, and for the continued success of in-house HTM programs across the region.

Thank you for taking the time to read and consider my comment.

David Whiteman
Sr. Clinical Engineering Program Director, UPMC

10. Emily Thomas: Faculty; Alumni - Submitted written comment

Topic: Budget Cuts at Commonwealth Campuses

Dear Board of Trustees,

I began my career at Penn State at the DuBois campus in 2005. The experience I had at Penn State DuBois was life changing. I was able to pursue my passion for wildlife at a campus that was a comfortable size for me having grown up in a small town in rural Pennsylvania. I quickly realized that Penn State DuBois was more than just the place I was going to college, it was a family that provided endless support and encouragement. I wish I could have stayed at Penn State DuBois longer than 3 years; however, I had to go to the University Park campus to finish my last year of my Bachelor's degree. I ended up staying there for a total of 3 years as I earned my Master's degree as well. Although I value what I learned at the University Park campus, it never felt like home like the DuBois campus did.

I was extremely grateful to be able to return to the Penn State DuBois campus in 2012 as a faculty member in the Wildlife Technology program that I had begun my college career in. The family is still here, and we are still providing endless support and encouragement for our students. Our students love it here, and if anything, we need an increase in our budget to support growth that will allow the students to stay here longer. We realize that our enrollment has decreased over the years and that adjustments need to be made, but how will we invest in our strengths and grow while facing a double-digit percent budget cut? I urge the Board to not forget about our Land Grant mission and our responsibility to provide a world class education to ALL the citizens of Pennsylvania, not just those who choose to go to the University Park campus.

WE ARE more than just numbers. WE ARE Penn State DuBois.

Thank you for your service on the Board and for your serious consideration of my comment.

Sincerely,

Emily H. Thomas
Proud Penn State DuBois Alumni and Faculty Member

11. Dorian Walker: Current Student - Submitted written comment

Topic: Commonwealth campus budget

I don't think the budgets should be cut for the branch campuses. They house and educate thousands of students before they are able to go to UP and if you cut budgets these student won't be able to gain education before arriving at UP. The branch campuses give students an opportunity to grasp the Penn State system and college life without being at a super big campus. They also get a chance to decide whether they want to go to UP or stay at their branch campus

12. Sarah Nodecker: Current Student - Submitted written comment

Topic: Budget cuts

Penn State New Kensington has changed my life by offering a high quality, accessible education without having to relocate which I wouldn't have been able to afford. The teachers at this campus are so passionate and knowledgeable that it makes every day exciting to go to school, which I once would've said I hated, and kept me from returning to higher education as an adult learner. I'm relieved I was able to get my education here before it was too late but these budget cuts are going to severely limit future students options.

13. Shirley Campbell: Staff - Submitted written comment

Topic: Need for Commonwealth campuses.

As plans are made for the future of Penn State, and especially the Commonwealth campuses, I want the board to be aware that these extensions of the university are critical for reaching and serving students who might otherwise find a Penn State education out of their reach. They enable first generation students, students from diverse backgrounds, students not at the social level of some of their peers, to find success in getting started in a college career. The personalized attention and focus specifically on students with these needs and students without financial resources to leave home benefit from the opportunity to attend these campuses.

14. Steven Evanchec: Faculty - Submitted written comment

Topic: FY 2026 Budget

Members of the Board of Trustees,

It is with great concern that I strongly encourage you to reject the proposed FY 2026 budget that will result in catastrophic cuts to the University College. Budget cuts that will irreparably harm the students who most rely on the educational opportunities that we provide, as well the communities we serve. The magnitude of these proposed budget cuts will force our most vulnerable students, many already in underserved areas, to endure even greater financial and cultural hardships.

The budget cuts that are being proposed are in direct conflict with the published Missions and Values statement from our great university. I implore you to familiarize yourself with our Mission and Values statement that can be found at the following link:

<https://www.psu.edu/this-is-penn-state/mission-and-values/>

There is great significance in the brief assertion that is delivered in our Mission and Values statement. I also ask you to pay special attention to arrowed section that includes the following:

- Integrity
- Respect
- Responsibility
- Discovery
- Excellence
- Community

Those bulleted points make strong reference to our ethical standards, diversity and inclusivity, accountability, leadership, and betterment of the communities our university serves. The proposed budget cuts are in direct conflict with the mission and values we proudly exemplify.

As stated in our Mission and Values, “Although the University is privately chartered by the Commonwealth, it was from the outset considered an ‘instrumentality of the state,’ that is, it carries out many of the functions of a public institution and promotes the general welfare of the citizenry.”

We have a responsibility to our citizens and communities....our friends, families, and neighbors who rely on the opportunities we provide. Opportunities that would not otherwise be available if they were not so convenient with regard to quality and proximity.

I do not envy your current situation as it relates to the upcoming FY 2026 budget. You all have a tremendous amount of influence over what happens in the communities throughout our commonwealth. I trust that you will make the appropriate decisions that best serve our great communities that rely so heavily on our teaching, research, and service.

Sincerely,

Steven Evanchec, CPA
Lecturer, Accounting
Penn State University – New Kensington

15. Skylar Dale: Alumni - Submitted written comment

Topic: Election of Academic Trustee; Election of Trustees Representing Business and Industry; Report on Election of Trustees by the Alumni; Election of At-Large Trustee

Penn State New Kensington is an important campus. It has given me the skills and confidence to pursue my education. Multiple professors have left an unexplainable impact on me that I am forever grateful for. I chose Penn State New Kensington because of the small class sizes, allowing me to build meaningful relationships with my professors to get the best learning experience. Commonwealth campuses provide unique and diverse environments for students. Penn State New Kensington allows you to experience this while pursuing your education, building relationships, and becoming a part of the Penn State family. I hope that Penn State New Kensington will be preserved, offering opportunities to future generations.

16. Joseph Ranalli: Faculty - Submitted written comment

Topic: Commonwealth Campus Budget Sustainability

I support the intent of a performance-based, responsible budget model and believe wholeheartedly in the need to manage our finances in a way that respects Pennsylvania taxpayers. However, the future budget model does not reflect differences in operational realities between the University Park colleges and the Commonwealth campuses and is unlikely to lead to an ability of Penn State to sustain operations with anything resembling present service.

Campus operating budgets are scheduled to be severely cut, and will be met primarily through reductions in faculty and staff headcount. Cuts primarily result from the fact that the budget model treats student headcount equally between the campuses and University Park. This is illogical. Due to their distributed nature, the campuses necessarily cannot take advantage of economies of scale in similar ways to units at University Park. Simultaneously, campuses serve a significantly more diverse range of student interests. To wit, the College of Business does not also attempt to provide the full first two years of education for students pursuing engineering degrees. The intent for campuses to offer programs while also meeting the 2+2 mission, which primarily serves units at University Park, is inherently a more expensive way to operate on a per student basis. Likewise, campus students are likely

to experience greater needs for academic and financial support that incur higher per-student costs. This should be reflected by the budget model.

Campuses are operating as lean as they possibly can while maintaining a pathway for students to make degree progress. Presently, campus students already experience extremely limited scheduling choices. General education courses have extremely few elective options. Required courses such as math and physics are offered via single sections. Further reductions of the faculty headcount will further exacerbate this situation to a degree that compromises our ability to meet the 2+2 mission of the campus and provide students with a robust and engaging in-person experience. I believe this will inevitably make attending the campuses extremely unattractive to potential students, reducing enrollments (and thus, future budgets) even further, and is a pathway that cannot lead to sustainable operations for the campuses.

Insofar as the campuses are a crucial part of Penn State's mission to provide access to an affordable Penn State education statewide, I encourage members of the board to direct the university to make adjustments to the budget model to reflect the uniqueness and importance of the Commonwealth Campus mission. I believe adjustments could be made to retain a performance-based, responsible budget, but to adequately reflect the distinctness of the campus and University Park missions and value campus contributions. Having observed operations at the university at an administrative level, the currently proposed cuts could be absorbed with much lesser impact by units at University Park. Asking them to bear a greater share of cuts is a pathway that would allow a sustainable future for the campuses and still provide the quality we expect of a Penn State education university-wide.

17. Charles Helou: Faculty - Submitted written comment

Topic: Budget Cuts to the Commonwealth campuses should be drastically reduced; and extended over several years; instead of several months. This would be in line with the Land Grant Mission of the University.

18. Andrew Perriello: Alumni - Submitted written comment

Topic: Budget Cuts to the Branch Campuses

The close mentorship I received from my professors at Penn State New Kensington was both career changing and career defining for me. I wouldn't be where I am today without the New Kensington campus and its great faculty. I'm saddened by the news of the impending budget cuts to the campus and what that means for future students. While I understand that money is not an unlimited resource, I urge you to reconsider the severity of the planned cuts.

19. Allen Soyster: Alumni - Submitted written comment

Topic: Board Voting Record

The following letter was published in the Centre Daily Times April 20, 2024. The data was assembled from a detailed review of the minutes of 79 Board meetings from 2014 to the present. Such data, in my view, should be in our public record and be used in any performance review of Board decision-making and University oversight.

PSU Leadership is Failing

This is a perilous time for Penn State. We face a \$100 million budget deficit, our University Park student

yield is the lowest in the Big 10 while our tuition is the highest. Will our Board step-up and make some hard decisions? Hardly, 21 of our current 36 Trustees with, collectively, 3705 career voting opportunities, have never recorded a no vote on any issue. Not on tuition increases, new buildings, personnel contracts, not on anything! A quintessential “rubber-stamp”! An exception is Alumni Trustee Barry Fenchak voting no 37% of the time, always asking for details, benchmarks and alternatives. More Barrys are needed in our upcoming alumni election. Soon, the Board will vote to approve a \$700 million bond, the largest in our history, to refit Beaver Stadium. Will 2025 witness a new stadium along with campus closures?

Now a new problem has arrived. Our new Provost is leaving after 10 months on the job. In my view, looking for a new job only months after appointment is a disservice to our university, especially in this tumultuous time of budget restructuring. Looking forward, however, I am hopeful that our rank-and-file faculty and staff can step-up and join with our President to overcome this leadership void. And would not our whole university community and alumni embrace a return to an earlier time when Penn State was a cherished destination for aspiring leaders and a \$500,000 annual retention bonus for a football coach was unthinkable?

Al Soyster
Boalsburg, PA

20. Heather Parizek: Faculty; Alumni; parent of current student - Submitted written comment

Topic: Budget model and APPR proposal

I am writing to urge the Board of Trustees to slow down the budget cut and APPR processes. These are extremely important tasks that should not be rushed. The University has so many moving parts, I fear that by attempting to complete these in just a number of months, mistakes will be made (and have in fact, already been made). I also feel that the timeline for these two processes is entirely backward. The first thing that should be completed is the APPR process so the University can identify programs of growth, and programs that may no longer be viable. An in-depth investigation is needed, taking into account the communities that are served by each program offered at every campus. Once this process is complete, then leaders will be better equipped to make financial decisions. It may very well be that there need to be cuts in order to balance the budget, but better to know what should be cut, and what should be expanded, before making those decisions. As a faculty member at one of the Commonwealth Campuses, I have seen firsthand how important Penn State is in my community. We serve a diverse population of in terms of socioeconomic, racial, and educational backgrounds, traditional and non-traditional age students, veterans, etc. We make real differences in their lives, and in turn the lives of their families, their communities, and the state overall. I feel like the campuses uniquely fulfill the Land Grant mission of the University. By cutting their budgets by such a huge amount without any prior research as to what impact these cuts may have, is irresponsible and could be detrimental to the mission of the University. As those entrusted with the stewardship of this great institution, it is vital that you not support the hasty decisions being made. Please allow for the time needed to conduct these processes thoroughly, accurately, and thoughtfully.

21. Ericson Kimbel, II: Current Student - Submitted written comment

Topic: Budget Cuts for Commonwealth Campuses

I am not too knowledgeable about the pricing cut, or why it is occurring. Regardless of this, the amount that is being cut in comparison to satellite campus' cost to run seems quite large.

I came to New Kensington as it was close to home, and I knew the soccer coach here. This provided me with a variety of experiences and skill building. Further I also participated in a variety of programs and clubs such as the GREAT program, which no other campus or college offer. These experience I gained I would not have been able to gain at other campuses. Thus, I would hate to see the New Kensington campus cut, as it has such great diversity in programs, staff, and culture, that many other college campuses do not have.

22. John Hannan: Faculty - Submitted written comment

Topic: Budget Model

The new budget model, with its use of student credit hours as a contributor to base budget allocation, is deeply flawed on two accounts, resulting in a significantly negative impact on the College of Engineering. First, it does not account for the lack of service courses and general education courses in CoE, as found in Science & Liberal Arts. In the typical Engineering major, approximately 2/3 of a student's credit hours come from outside of the College of Engineering. Second, the use of credit hours towards a base budget model assumes that teaching is a commodity with uniform costs across the University. The cost to hire and retain a faculty member in Engineering is far greater than the cost for them in most other colleges. Most other colleges do not need to compete with industry salaries that easily top \$250K in some engineering fields, particularly Computer Science. Salaries for professional faculty in computer science top \$100K at some of our peer institutions.

The impact of the new budget model has already had a severe impact in Engineering. To balance our budget we cut staff. The remaining staff were then overworked. Some of them have left the College. In Computer Science & Engineering, we went from three staff supporting our graduate degree programs to zero. They all left to find positions elsewhere with a reasonable workload. Current undergraduate staff are overworked, burning out, and looking elsewhere. Faculty members are asked to teach larger classes with fewer resources. They feel overworked and under-supported, and some of them are looking elsewhere. While our peers are expanding their departments, the CSE Department is shrinking. We've lost 6 faculty member in the last two years while our enrollments have grown.

All of these events have been predictable, so I guess they were intended. The future from here is predictable too if the budget allocations are not adjusted to support Engineering. We will not be competitive with our peers. You will get what you pay for and have a very difficult time recovering.

23. Jack Dellostritto: Alumni - Submitted written comment

Topic: Budget cut to commonwealth campuses

Greetings,

I am a 2017 graduate of the Biomed Engineering Technology program at Penn State New Kensington. The education that I received during my years at PSNK was monumental in getting

to high level of my career in such a short amount of time. The quality of the instructors, course material, and of course, Joie Marhefka, made for seamless step into the biomedical engineering world.

Without Penn State New Kensington, I may not have found a way into this career. At the time, I was serving in the Army and had our first child on the way, which made it impossible for me to travel to the State College campus. PSNK offered the quality of education that I needed to jump into an awesome career.

Though I live in North Carolina, I still enjoy catching up with the PSNK Biomedical Engineering Technology program and occasionally doing some guest lectures with their students. The Biomedical Engineering field is hurting as a whole, which makes their program so much more important. I would hate for any budget cuts to hurt the ability that they have to create more Biomedical Engineer Technicians that are so desperately needed.

Thank you,

Jack DelloStritto
2017 PSNK Alumni
Radiology Engineering Specialist
Raleigh, NC

24. Joseph Cuiffi: Faculty; Alumni - Submitted written comment

Topic: Budget Approval

As a faculty member and former student, the process of implementing a new budget model has been very disappointing, especially for the commonwealth campuses. The proposed budget for Academic Year 2025-26 requires significant changes to the campuses along with many faculty and staff reductions. There is currently no plan for how the reductions will be accomplished. While it is recognized that the Board does not concern themselves with the details behind the budget allocations to the colleges, please realize that there is currently no plan that achieves the proposed budget, and there will be no further information until at least the end of the calendar year. This is highly problematic.

Corporate reorganization is typically led by a strategic process to define a new vision, prior to defining a tactical plan and areas for budget reallocation. Major budget cuts prior to a plan are typically executed because of a critical emergency or complete management or market collapse. Disruptions on the proposed scale hardly seem to be necessary as an emergency effort. We realize that funding our dispersed campuses is expensive, and if PSU is unable to get increases to our per student state allocations, we need to work with the state to re-define a more targeted vision and mission of the campuses. Most faculty have been trying for years to avoid the petty competition between campuses to share our resources and streamline our processes and would welcome a re-envisioning process in a thoughtful manner.

We have just started a strategic planning process with the Office of VP of Commonwealth Campuses. We will not see outcomes of this exercise or a plan for campus restructuring (let alone the APPR) until the end of the calendar year. The hundreds of faculty and staff that will be cut due to this new budget will then receive less than six months of notice prior to their termination. Not providing a one-year notice prior to termination is unacceptable and frankly embarrassing for an organization of our size and stated ethical principles. Unfortunately, the damage has already been done. We are already losing faculty and staff due to the impending

cuts.

This process is now impacting the student experience and enrollment. Replacing lost full-time faculty over the summer is a challenge, and we offer very low part-time faculty rates in the Pittsburgh area. There is no way to keep up the high quality of PSU branded education or experience for the students under conditions where we have large faculty turnover/reductions. Furthermore, a lack of plan has meant a lack of clarity for students and parents. We have not had a messaging guide for student and parent questions this spring based on what they have been hearing about our budget crisis. This will only cause further reductions in our enrollment and negative student misconceptions about the university.

Please consider having a plan for the campuses presented by the administration before approving the budget.

25. Julia Kasdorf: Faculty - Submitted written comment

Topic: Campuses

As a professor at University Park, I worry about increasing the class size for first-year students. We already struggle to find classrooms and dormitory space for undergraduates at UP, and our students struggle to find places for themselves within academic departments and campus cultures. Are decreasing enrollments on the Campuses related to increased first-year admissions in State College in recent years? Are they related to the raising costs of tuition and room and board? Our Trustees must understand that the array of smaller campuses across the Commonwealth permits students to economize by living and working at home during the first year or two of college. When they transfer to University Park in the third year, I have observed, students from the campuses are more mature and better prepared for college life, more able to contribute to an academic community that reflects the economic and cultural diversity of the nation, and indeed, the world.

I am also concerned that Penn State will lose connections with rural places and small towns with the closure of our Commonwealth campuses. For instance, the Coal and Coke Heritage Center, housed in the library at the Fayette Campus, contains a rare archive of oral histories gathered in that region from the 1970s on, as well as a museum of important artifacts from the bituminous coal and beehive coke oven era. Perhaps the oral history archive could move to Special Collections in the Paterno Library, and the artifacts could migrate to the Earth and Mineral Sciences Museum at University Park—both groaning under the weight of their current holdings. More significantly, how will the collections best serve the community whose histories they represent and preserve if the Fayette Campus closes? This may seem a small thing, but symbolizes one way that Penn State has served industry and workers in Pennsylvania. I understand that difficult decisions must be made, but I urge the Trustees to prize the relationship between our University and the citizens of the Commonwealth—tax payers, business leaders, alumni families—and consider more than the bottom line as you weigh the human and future implications of closing our far flung campuses.

26. Jobeth Diaz: Current Student - Submitted written comment

Topic: Budget Cut

The money they unnecessarily spend on the private jet may be more useful for the small Penn State campuses.

27. Cheriden Turiczek: Current Student - Submitted written comment

Topic: commonwealth campuses

i think it is important for them to work hard to keep the commonwealth campuses open because it provides a way for people to get a penn state degree while having the ability to make the personal connections with professors and administrators. They are also an important building blocks for many students to get to main campus.

28. Jacob Kerlin: Alumni - Submitted written comment

Topic: Keeping Biomed Program

Hello, I was told that the biomed program might be getting shut down. I wanted to reach out and say how much this program is needed. First off, we have more people retiring in the field than we do graduates. We need more exposure to the field, not less. I can't say how many times we have been understaffed here at west penn hospital in our biomed department and just no one applying to open positions because there is just no one in our field. Taking away the program would just make everything 10x worse! So please not only keep the program around but spread the word! This career path is too important to get tossed in the garbage.

29. Elisa Beshero-Bondar: Faculty - Submitted written comment

Topic: Commonwealth Campuses

Severe cuts to commonwealth campuses will harm the university's productivity in teaching and research and supporting our land grant mission. We wish the Board of Trustees to intervene in the implementation of the budget model, which has already been shown to be flawed. Care must be taken to protect our land grant mission in service of Pennsylvania's students, strongly connected to our campuses. Care must be taken not to irreparably harm our campuses such that they cannot support research programs and support services that distinguish our university as a whole. Commonwealth campuses must not be perceived as mere "2 + 2" feeders to University Park. Please recognize that several of our campuses are research hubs with innovative community-based initiatives that require continued support. The damage of extreme cuts to our campuses will not be undone in our state.

30. Alexis Hirtz: Current Student - Submitted written comment

Topic: Approval of Minutes from the February 16; 2024 Meetings

I really enjoyed my time at Penn State New Kensington and I believe it is a campus worth putting money into. I think that it would be beneficial to the campus and students to give more funding for activities to get students engaged.

31. Alexa Marasco : Current Student - Submitted written comment

Topic: Approval of Minutes from the February 16; 2024 Meetings

This campus is nice, laid back, and surrounded by amazing people. The faculty, staff and students are all very welcoming creating a comfortable environment. This campus gives people the opportunity to attend school at cheaper costs but still obtain a penn state degree. I am proud to be apart of the penn state family and what my degree will lead me to!

32. Kaylie Kickbush : Current Student - Submitted written comment

Topic: Funds and budget cuts

Budget cuts may not affect me personally but it will affect the school which is personal to me. Some of the most significant things about the campus are all the things the campus has to offer and all the stuff they bring in for the students to do. There is so much that the college needs to update to entice more students and I recently learned that although the campus claims to be handicapped accessible, it was very difficult to help my stepdad get into the theatre of the school to attend my awards ceremony. Without proper funds this campus will never reach its potential and I believe students will not be satisfied with the outcome of their attendance here.

33. Kayla Swanger: Current Student - Submitted written comment

Topic: Report on Election of Trustees by Agricultural Delegates

For having to take many chemistry class, I would prefer a choice between more than one chemistry teacher because people have many ways of teaching.

34. Meredith Carter: Current Student - Submitted written comment

Topic: Budget cuts

Being able to go to a branch campus is extremely important to me. I would not be able to afford college if it weren't for the cost and the location of Penn State New Kensington. As a junior, I am proud that I will be graduating next year from this small campus. Being able to have invaluable experiences at this campus means I will graduate with experience under my belt, something that might not be possible in a campus with 30,000+ students. I get to work closely with professors in undergraduate research projects, I get to know the community of New Kensington in a personal way. I feel like my actions have an impact on this campus. As someone who did not know what to do with my life when I entered PSNK, it has given me life direction and an ability to be surrounded by a community of people who care about my growth and well being. I feel safe on this campus. I feel seen on this campus. These are qualities that are lost in large campuses. Please reconsider the budget cuts and do not hurt branch campuses that define Penn State as a land grant university.

35. Eric Gonzalez: Faculty - Submitted written comment

Topic: Budget Cuts

The way the discussion of budget cuts has been handled by President Bendapudi and VPCC DelliCarpini has put enormous amounts of stress and uncertainty on the teaching line faculty. A math professor who has been with PSU for 30 years has been let go, leaving an entire campus without math faculty. This extreme measure means any teaching line faculty is vulnerable to job loss and morale has completely disintegrated. Even with a 1 year contract, any teaching line faculty feels constantly vulnerable.

The president and VPCC are being vague and sometimes flippant/insensitive with their remarks regarding the future of the commonwealth campuses. Instead of not speaking clearly for fear of upsetting people, they need to communicate plans and be clear about the future so everyone can prepare for the budget cuts. Budget cuts will always make people unhappy, but the way they are being handled is making us unhappy, confused, and angry.

It seems like the goal is to close campuses and focus on University Park. It seems like they are

running the university like a business instead of a public service educational institution. Yes, the university as a whole should not lose money or it will eventually close. That does not mean all sectors must be profitable. Taking losses on some commonwealth campuses should be expected, the benefit is that the whole of Pennsylvania has access to a PSU institution, giving opportunities to first generation college students and underrepresented groups which would otherwise not have them. That is an altruistic public service goal, and it should not be up for discussion.

36. Penelope Morrison: Faculty - Submitted written comment

Topic: Budget cuts

I am an associate professor of Biobehavioral Health (BBH) at Penn State New Kensington. I am writing to ask that the Board of Trustees consider the damage that the Penn State budget crisis is inflicting on the Commonwealth Campuses and our ability to recruit, enroll, and maintain students at our campuses.

Penn State has not only failed to develop and employ a consistent message for students (prospect, incoming, and all of the above) about the budget and financial challenges the University is facing, but it has also failed to provide a clear path forward in terms of how these budget cuts may impact the PSU community as a whole. In absence of clarity and without a unified message for students from the Office of the Vice President of the Commonwealth Campuses (OVPCC) or the President's office, rumors have begun to spread; this week I had a new student come and ask me about the BBH program at PSNK. She said she wants to pursue a BBH degree, but she was unsure because she had heard that "Penn State was phasing out BBH at Penn State New Kensington due to the budget." I did my best to assure her that this was a wholly untrue and unfounded rumor.

It is not surprising that rumors are spreading around our campus. What is surprising is the lack of consistent messaging to students regarding what is actually happening at PSU. The university needs to do better. By not sending students a message, we ARE sending them a message and it is all too easy for rumors to spread in this environment. Without any messaging for students, we have been left to try to fight rumors on our own. I want to impress upon the BOT that these rumors are problematic and potentially more damaging to the Commonwealth Campuses (and Penn State as an institution), than any budgetary cuts we may undergo. They present an uphill battle for our campuses, which already struggle with a great deal of bias, in terms of recruitment, enrollment, and retention and will adversely impact our ability to attract and maintain students. In short, rumors of this sort will damage our campuses' reputation, and will deter students from selecting Penn State as their college of choice. They will also create panic among current students who may seek to complete their degrees elsewhere. In a highly competitive market, where students have many choices about where to attend college – why would they chose Penn State, if they do not have faith that the university will be able to fulfill its promise to them of a four-year education at the campus of their choice?

I am asking you to please consider the long-term damage that this will have on the Commonwealth Campuses (and Penn State) and please consider pressing the OVPCC and President for a universal, consistent, and more importantly, clear message to be sent to current and prospective students about the state of affairs at Penn State.

37. Haylee Shultz: Current Student - Submitted written comment

Topic: Penn State New Kensington student comment

The Penn State New Kensington campus is a crucial outreach factor to common wealth areas. Not only is it a cheaper option than UP, but it draws in out of state students as well.

#keepPennKen

38. John Hammond: Faculty; Parent; spouse of alumni - Submitted written comment

Topic: Budget and Commonwealth Campuses.

Is President Bendapudi and the Board of Trustees working to ensure that the CWCs will be included in Governor Shapiro's plan to reduce tuition costs?

University leadership often speak about the importance of access and affordability at the CWCs. Unfortunately, the CWCs have been neither affordable nor accessible for our target populations for a long time. The \$14,000+ tuition costs for the CWC's might as well be 14 million for many of the families who we are supposed to serve. If Penn State is to retain any semblance of its Land Grant mission, it must dramatically decrease the cost of attendance at the CWCs. Enrollment at the CWCs has decreased dramatically over the past thirty years precisely because the cost of attending the CWCs for first generation college students in economically marginalized regions has risen so dramatically. The fix for the CWCs is quite simple. Substantially decrease the cost of attendance at the CWCs.

39. Katarina O'Leary : Current Student - Submitted written comment

Topic: Disagree on Budget Cut

Penn State New Ken has given me the opportunity to study my chosen field of BBH at a small campus that was close to my parents. I would not of been comfortable having to go to a campus further away and most likely have to dorm. I want future students to be able to experience the more close knit bond you can experience at a smaller campus where it's easier to chose to be able to live at home or rent nearby instead of having to dorm or rent in a more expensive area.

40. Kristen Hark: Faculty - Submitted written comment

Topic: proposed cuts to the OVPCC 25/26 budget

To the Board of Trustees

We, the faculty of the Lehigh Valley campus, are writing to convey our apprehension concerning the release of the Penn State leadership's 2025/26 fiscal year budget plan. We are thankful to the Board of Trustees for your confidence in the future of our campus. Your approval of the addition to our building has enabled growth and new programs serving the residents of the Lehigh Valley, especially those unable to afford to move to University Park to finish their degrees. This addition has also allowed us to grow our enrollment in this economically vibrant part of the state.

Our region is a key engine of Pennsylvania's economy, with expanding hubs in manufacturing, medical education, healthcare, IT, supply chain management, and more. Students in all of our 12 locally-delivered majors benefit from Penn State Lehigh Valley faculty's direct and ever-evolving connections to growing industries, nonprofits, and governmental organizations, securing internships and jobs in companies such as ADP, B Braun, Lutron, Olympus, PPL, St. Luke's, Lehigh Valley Health Network, Amazon, Deloitte, Walmart, UPS, Victaulic, as well as, in our expanding social, mental, and criminal justice services. Furthermore, the student body at Penn State Lehigh Valley mirrors the growing diversity of the region, driven by international migration.

The Lehigh Valley's largest counties, Lehigh and Northampton, rank in the top 4% nationwide for net migration, highlighting the dynamic demographic shifts shaping our region. With nearly

half (41%) of our student body comprised of first-generation college students, and an equally significant portion (47%) identifying as racial or ethnic minorities, Penn State Lehigh Valley serves as a crucial avenue for social mobility for marginalized, socioeconomically disadvantaged groups in Pennsylvania.

We are concerned that the large budget cuts to the Commonwealth Campuses proposed for FY26 will cripple our ability to grow and properly serve our community. This could jeopardize the progress our faculty and staff have worked tirelessly to achieve, leveraging the momentum built over years to capitalize on the growth and needs of our regional economy. While a budget cut of this magnitude may provide short-term financial relief, it imperils Penn State's commitment to its land-grant mission.

The campuses across the state of Pennsylvania afford its residents opportunities not found elsewhere in their regions. Each campus plays a crucial role in meeting the diverse and local needs of Pennsylvania's communities, while also serving Penn State's overarching land-grant mission. We acknowledge and understand the importance of reaching a balanced budget, but also believe a more holistic approach is warranted. Given this, we implore you to stay the proposed cuts to the OVPCC 25/26 budget and to replace the proposal with a reasonable, multi-year initiative to give all vital stakeholders the opportunity to engage in developing a comprehensive plan and vision for the future of Penn State.

Thank you for your time and consideration,

The faculty at Penn State Lehigh Valley

41. Lucas Redmond: Faculty - Submitted written comment
Topic: 2025/2026 Fiscal Year Proposed Budget

April 30, 2024

To: Board of Trustees
The Pennsylvania State University
201 Old Main
University Park, PA 16802

From: Penn State Schuylkill Campus Faculty Senate

Re: Penn State leadership's 2025/2026 fiscal year budget plan

Dear Trustees:

The January 2024 unveiling of Penn State leadership's 2025/2026 fiscal year budget plan has caused considerable apprehension and distress throughout the University College. Despite leadership messaging that "we have 18 months to figure things out," faculty, staff, and students are well-aware that cuts of the magnitude proposed – \$54 million (14.1%) from the previous year's allocation to the Office of the Vice President of Commonwealth Campuses (OVPCC) – could only be obtained through aggressive and extensive faculty and staff terminations at many or most University College campuses.

Although the severity of the 2025/2026 budget plan is intended to solve problems driven by

challenging financial exigencies, we believe that neither the solutions it proposes nor the newly forged budget model from which it is derived provide a promising or acceptable “roadmap” for Penn State’s future. The implausibly compressed timeframe to make major fiscal determinations to meet the July 1, 2025 implementation deadline would force insufficiently deliberated organizational decisions. We fear that overhasty action will imperil the University College’s capacity to continue serving as a foundation of Penn State’s commitment to its Land-grant mission.

The current budget model unfairly undervalues how our faculty activity is credited; disregards the necessity of both reduced tuition and geographic proximity to ensuring access and affordability for under-served PA residents (and in fact punishes the campuses for serving our land-grant mission); ignores the fact that University College campuses serve higher percentages of first-generation students and students who stay in PA after graduation, and minimizes the importance of our students and our academic communities within the Penn State system. Furthermore, these flaws in the budget model would be amplified by the looming FAFSA debacle predicted to disproportionately affect lower-income households and result in lower enrollments across the U.S., not just the University College.

Although enrollments at many Commonwealth Campuses are down, Penn State Schuylkill is one of only two campuses to show positive enrollment growth over the last five years. Our campus is already operating with several open positions that will not be filled soon. A heavy-handed and equal across the board approach toward budget cuts will exacerbate this situation to the detriment of the most important stakeholders of our campus: the students of Penn State Schuylkill.

We call on you to reject the proposed cuts to the OVPCC 25/26 budget and to direct President Bendapudi, Dr. DelliCarpini, and Penn State leadership to replace the proposal with a multi-year initiative to give all stakeholders the opportunity to engage in developing a comprehensive plan and vision for the future of the University College and Penn State.

Jointly endorsed with unanimous support by the Penn State Schuylkill Campus Faculty Senate,

Lucas J Redmond Yelena Meadows Lisa Robinson
Chair Vice Chair Secretary

42. Kristen Pueschel: Faculty - Submitted written comment

Topic: Slowing budget cuts

I am a teaching professor in math at Penn State New Kensington. Working closely with students is the best part of my job. It is a great privilege to guide our students as they grow as learners and as individuals. At PSNK, we see all sorts of students: from academic superstars to average students to students that are moving mountains for every C. All of them deserve choices in what to major in at our campus, robust course offerings, and essential support services such as tutoring and counselors.

Please do not approve the budget if it includes the \$49 million in cuts to the Commonwealth campuses. We are told that swift action is needed, due to a promise that Dr. Bendapudi made to the Board to balance the budget for FY26. Please explicitly release Dr. Bendapudi from this promise and slow the budget cuts. The current timeline will decimate our campus. Individual campus allocations are not expected until late fall. This will give us less than a year to make what are expected to be extreme changes. Already, the threat and uncertainty of these budget

cuts make us vulnerable to losses as faculty and staff look for more stable positions. Rehiring for these positions will be very challenging.

In the face of enrollment declines, we recognize that further collaboration will be needed between campuses. However, the current budget timeline does not provide us with sufficient time to plan for and execute the changes that will be required. This risks subjecting students to emergency measures for covering courses and threatens the quality of the education we can provide to our students.

Underpinning the budget is a flawed budget model. One distressing feature is that credit hours are weighted by tuition. For 100 actual student credit hours at NK, the model says that we are only teaching 70. This system punishes us with less funding because of our lower tuition. Lower tuition is critical for our access mission, but it does not translate into lower expenses. We are told that subventions show the value that Penn State places on the Commonwealth campuses – but we have not been shown why a credit hour at New Kensington should be counted as less productive than a credit hour at University Park. Moreover, because state appropriations are included in general funds and distributed with these tuition weights, the current model gives more state tax dollars per student to University Park than to Commonwealth campuses, despite the UP student body being only 52% PA resident, compared to 77% PA residents at Commonwealth campuses. Although we advocate in the PA legislature for fair funding, with parity among peers for per student appropriations, when it is time to distribute these appropriations internally, they are not allocated in a per student or fair way. Echoing Middle States: the University should clearly tie our institutional objectives (and values) to our budget allocation processes. A new budget model is needed, and it should be built with substantial input from all stakeholders.

43. Andrea Adolph: Faculty - Submitted written comment
Topic: Budget cuts

I write to request that the Penn State Board of Trustees strongly consider adjusting the timeline for balancing the institutional budget in order to accomplish a thoughtful, intentional series of changes that do not compromise the mission of the University as a whole entity. In order to quickly make budgetary changes, large-scale plans with no detailed routes toward implementation have been put forward, but at what cost to the health of Penn State? As the Board is well aware, the campus structure and its footprint across the state is valuable to Pennsylvanians and is the primary way that the University fulfills our land-grant mission. This mission, touted so regularly by President Bendapudi, must be cultivated in order to be sustained, and the announced budget cuts, sans a detailed understanding of the broad-scale impacts to our students, will cause our mission instead to wither.

In addition to many benefits that the regional campuses of Penn State provide to the University, campuses provide important opportunities to students more readily than would a much larger campus. Students arrive at campuses often with unmined potential, and with small student-faculty ratios, our faculty can discover and foster that potential, enabling students to thrive.

One example of this is a first-year student who had attempted to join the US Marine Corps, but he injured out of basic training. He instead matriculated at our campus, where he is developing in ways that he may never have imagined. He is intelligent, a strong critical thinker and writer, and a natural leader, and those traits are eminently visible in our small-campus setting. This student could be academically successful at University Park, but I guarantee you that he would not attain social-emotional strengths in the way that he can here.

I think, too, of an alumna who began her studies at a PASSHE institution but stopped out, having little of the one-on-one support that she truly needed. After she transferred, she struggled but was soon identified as an engaged student who craved leadership opportunities. She was, in time, our SGA president, a THON dancer, and a recipient of the prestigious Eric Walker Award, the highest recognition of a Commonwealth Campus student. She is now an active member of our local chapter of the Alumni Society.

In closing, I add a comment that was written by current student who wishes to submit anonymously. She writes, “This campus has given me many opportunities, ones that I would not be able to have otherwise. I am being given so many things at this campus that allow me to succeed. It is very important to me that I can know my professors on a personal level and see them as mentors rather than strangers. I want future generations to be able to have the opportunities that I have had.”

I want that, too. Please work with University leadership to conduct a full-scale analysis of the impacts of severe budget cuts before those cuts are made, perhaps with unalterable consequences for so many students.

44. Andre Hayes: Current Student - Submitted written comment

Topic: Budget Cuts

I am a student at Penn st new Kensington as obviously I don't know much but budget cuts are going to hurt our community. We have been doing everything we can with fundraising for teams and schools. We continue to grow as a school yearly with more student being enrolled. Our teachers are great and they deserve to be here. Please rethink your decisions.

45. Noah Kessler : Current Student - Submitted written comment

Topic: New Kensington

I think Penn State New Kensington was important in me going to college as it saved me money, allowed me to stay home with my family for longer, and also has made my college experience cheaper overall. I think new kensington was a great experience for me to go to for my first two years of college, and I met people who are some of my closest friends now, and the professors allowed me to succeed. I would hate to see this school get budget cuts as I have a good experience here and believe this college is important for people in New Kensington to receive higher education, something around here that is rare.

46. Stephen Wiedemer: Alumni; Staff - Submitted written comment

Topic: Penn State University Funding

Dear Penn State Board of Trustee Members:

I appreciate the opportunity to provide input concerning your upcoming May 2-3, 2024, meeting agenda and topics of discussion. The pivotal role which our university provides to the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania cannot be dismissed merely on political revenue disparities. In my opinion, the entire Penn State organization (faculty, staff, students, alumni, and lobbyists) need to speak candidly about the ways to progressively pay for the costs of education in our commonwealth. It is my firm belief that not only Penn State, but every other organization which receives state funding, is losing out on a vast revenue stream that every other energy producing

state collects [volume-based gas extraction fees]. The \$50,000 per well fee, which is paid to each county is a pittance compared to what is being paid to every other state and these revenues provide funds for: education, transportation, healthcare, etc. Here are links to some files which show the truth about the gas \$\$ and Penn State lobbyists should show to the legislature.

Natural Gas Tax Revenue--5-7% Excise Tax--

[State Oil and Gas Severance Taxes (ncsl.org)]

<https://www.ncsl.org/energy/state-oil-and-gas-severance-taxes>

[Natural Gas Dry Production (eia.gov)]

https://nam10.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.eia.gov%2Fdnv%2Fng%2Fng_prod_sum_a_EPG0_FPD_mmcfa.htm&data=05%7C02%7Cs11%40psu.edu%7C3f976deb535148c1a0f808dc38a36cdb%7C7cf48d453ddb4389a9c1c115526eb52e%7C0%7C0%7C638447521751413919%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6IklhaWwiLCJXVCi6Mn0%3D%7C0%7C%7C%7C&sdata=Y0mr8KbaffV%2Bfug4JO%2FWOS8Sm%2Ffc2u%2F80s%2BVKygXX1A%3D&reserved=0

[how much Texas pay for natural gas tax - Search (bing.com)]

https://www.bing.com/search?q=how+much+texas+pay+for+natural+gas+tax&cvid=1123a2df9a2143b69a4f7f8f55b9f070&gs_lcrp=EgZjaHJvbWUyBggAEEUYOTIGCAEQABhAMgYIAhAAGEAyBggDEAAYQDIGCAQQABhAMgYIBRAAGEAyBggGEAAYQDIGCAcQABhAMgYICBAAGEAyBwgJEEUY_FXSAQkxMTQ4NmowajSoAgCwAgA&FORM=ANAB01&PC=U531

[Ohio missed out on \$1.2 billion plus in severance tax revenue | Policy Matters Ohio | November 18, 2021]

<https://nam10.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.policymattersohio.org%2Fblog%2F2021%2F11%2F18%2Fohio-missed-out-on-12-billion-plus-in-severance-tax-revenue&data=05%7C02%7Cs11%40psu.edu%7Cdf84374e976d4b3a77f008dc389d4eba%7C7cf48d453ddb4389a9c1c115526eb52e%7C0%7C0%7C638447495471430350%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6IklhaWwiLCJXVCi6Mn0%3D%7C0%7C%7C%7C&sdata=xuEge9xTRU3z2tLA2bPT%2BWKJYdphOWyFqncfjRDfz%2B4%3D&reserved=0>

[Marcellus Shale Impact Fee - Commonwealth Foundation]

<https://nam10.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.commonwealthfoundation.org%2Fresearch%2Fmarcellus-shale-impact-fee%2F&data=05%7C02%7Cs11%40psu.edu%7Cff4a4986d0904c03258c08dc389d930f%7C7cf48d453ddb4389a9c1c115526eb52e%7C0%7C0%7C638447496615692958%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6IklhaWwiLCJXVCi6Mn0%3D%7C0%7C%7C%7C&sdata=bxQ5cxwn5wDexq6gs%2F7iCzgBrnYF529jewGZy%2FmdONE%3D&reserved=0>

We will all look forward to your efforts to lead this Marcellus gas tax discussion with our legislature.

We Are....Penn State!

Kind Regards
Steve

Stephen J. Wiedemer (College of Agriculture--ERM--Class of 1986)

47. Abhinav Aima: Faculty - Submitted written comment
Topic: Commonwealth Campus Budget Cuts

Dear Board of Trustees,

The Penn State Commonwealth Campuses are delivering on our land grant mission by providing access to Penn State degree programs that are otherwise inaccessible to many students living in Pennsylvania. The campuses are also employers in small town areas, which are challenged by declining populations and inadequate economic growth - challenges that the campuses are trying to address. We request you to delay all budget cuts to campuses that would reduce employed faculty and staff with an eye on the impact this would have on our communities, and to ask instead for measures that would enhance enrollment and productivity across the Commonwealth Campuses. Cutting faculty and staff positions will reduce the access and quality of the educational programs, and probably begin a downward spiral that will result in the closure of such campuses - which would have a negative impact on the communities, and on our land grant mission.

Yours sincerely,
Abhinav Aima

48. Michael Yatauro: Faculty - Submitted written comment
Topic: Budget Model

Why does the budget model for 2025-2026 currently include such drastic cuts to the commonwealth campuses, despite the valuable services they provide? I for one am proud of the work that my colleagues and I do at the Brandywine campus, and other commonwealth campuses. From running programs for the local community, to engaging in meaningful research with students, to providing excellent learning experiences. It feels as though the proposed cuts diminish the significance of these contributions to the Penn State and local communities. I have personally had conversations with bright students who indicated they would not have been able to afford tuition at University Park. The commonwealth campuses provide opportunities for many such students who are now flourishing and who will either remain to complete a degree at a commonwealth campus, or who will become welcome members of the community at University Park. This is something I can empathize with, since, as a first-generation student supporting myself, I needed a more affordable (but no less rewarding) option when I began my academic career. The current proposed model will most likely limit resources and opportunities for the students who benefit most from a more affordable education. I humbly request that sincere consideration be given to reevaluating the 2025-2026 budget model and the extending of its timeline.

49. Joie Marhefka: Faculty - Submitted written comment
Topic: Budget Cuts to Commonwealth Campuses

I have been teaching Biomedical Engineering Technology (BET) at Penn State New Kensington (PSNK) for the past eight years, and, in that time, I have seen the impact that this campus and

this degree has on our students, community, and the state of Pennsylvania. BET graduates fill essential roles in hospitals in the Pittsburgh region and throughout the state. Our graduates are responsible for maintaining, troubleshooting, and repairing medical devices ranging from IV pumps to ventilators to x-ray machines. Doctors and nurses rely on our graduates to do their jobs, and patients rely on our graduates to keep equipment working so that they can get the diagnosis or treatment that they need. PSNK is one of only four schools in the United States to offer a BET degree accredited by ABET, the organization that accredits post-secondary education programs in engineering, and the only one in Pennsylvania. PSNK has one of only four programs in this field in Pennsylvania and the only one in the greater Pittsburgh area. The vast majority of BET graduates stay in the local area following graduation, and almost every hospital in the Pittsburgh area employs PSNK graduates in their clinical engineering department. The value of this program to hospitals in the Pittsburgh region cannot be ignored. Overall, local industry demand for PSNK graduates is high, and we have more employers interested in our students than we have students. The proposed cuts to the commonwealth campuses' budgets will undoubtedly have a negative impact on the workforce in our community and in communities throughout Pennsylvania.

This associate degree provides opportunities for students who are not able to or ready to commit to a four-year degree and prepares them for a professional career with significant opportunity for advancement. This degree provides a pathway for under-resourced students and for adult learners, which make up a significant percentage of BET students, to get a Penn State degree and the education that they need to pursue a professional career. And our graduates get jobs. In the eight years that I've been at PSNK, 100% of our graduates have gotten jobs in their field following graduation. While some graduates pursue and advance in careers without additional education, many return to school, often to Penn State, to complete their bachelor's degrees. I am concerned about the effect that the proposed budget cuts to the commonwealth campuses might have on this program. The closing of programs and campuses, which may result from the proposed budget cuts, will deprive future students, particularly under-resourced students, of the opportunity to earn a degree and pursue a professional career.

I share this example of Biomedical Engineering Technology because it's my field, but I know that the commonwealth campuses have many other majors that provide amazing opportunities for students and support their local workforce. I ask that you consider the impact that the proposed budget cuts will have on both students, especially under-resourced students, and on the local workforce, when deciding whether or not to approve the Penn State Budget.

50. Beth Greenberg: Faculty - Submitted written comment

Topic: 2025-26 budget for Commonwealth Campuses

I have two concerns I would like to share with the Board of Trustees as it considers the 2025-26 budget. First, please be aware that there are currently innovative cross-campus programs already operating and working well. Secondly, I would highlight the important contribution provided by the Commonwealth Campuses to the communities they serve and to the University's land grant mission.

The culture at Penn State Hazleton is supportive and respectful, communication and collaboration are highly valued, and student success is our priority. It has been an honor to work with our students, many of whom are the first in their family to attend college, are underrepresented minorities, or multilingual learners. Many students commute from their parents' homes to save money, and some are already working and raising a family. It has been rewarding to help students attain professional skills, attend graduation, hear about students' first professional jobs, and to see students help one another succeed. I am grateful to the University

for this opportunity to make a difference in the field of healthcare by educating its future leaders through the Health Policy and Administration (HPA) Consortium in which Penn State Hazleton participates.

The field of healthcare administration is growing and offers good jobs. Many of our students are committed to staying in the local area and would likely not complete a degree if it meant moving to University Park or elsewhere. The availability of HPA-related jobs and the ability to complete the degree locally are key factors in educating these much-needed professionals and retaining them in the local area after graduation. It is good for the students and the community to have healthcare administrators who understand and are committed to the local community. Of course, this concept also applies to other disciplines where local talent is needed.

The HPA program is part of several integrated, cross campus consortia operating through University College. With additional deliberation and strategic planning, these consortia have the potential to realize fiscal efficiencies and enhance program integration across the University.

The HPA Consortium, which involves Hazleton, Lehigh Valley, Shenango, Beaver, Mont Alto, Harrisburg, and Abington, allows us to offer a Baccalaureate degree in HPA at these campuses. More importantly, our HPA program works closely and cooperatively with the programs at University Park and World Campus on defining, assessing, and accrediting the program. We operate as one HPA program. This helps us offer exceptional courses, events, activities, and opportunities.

I am concerned that budget decisions may disrupt this important, innovative, and essential program for HPA students – and would similarly put other cooperative cross-campus programs at risk. Furthermore, consortia have the potential to effectuate economic solutions while improving the resources available to students at Commonwealth Campuses.

I would respectfully request that, as the University encourages further collaboration among the campuses, consideration be given to multi-campus programs already in operation and that the Board carefully consider and support the unique role of the campuses in meeting the University's land grant mission.

51. Kristen Olson: Faculty - Submitted written comment

Topic: Campus support

The campuses provide an important access point to a Penn State education for Pennsylvania students with financial challenges and/or location-bound responsibilities. The campuses allow the university to meet students where they are, instead of keeping education out of reach physically and financially.

52. Keely Roen: Faculty; Alumni; Parent and Donor - Submitted written comment

Topic: Budget Comment

I am the embodiment of Penn State - I moved from out of state for graduate school and am a current faculty member, married to a PSU grad who is a staff member, and have two kids currently at PSU (one starting at UP, one started at DuBois). I was thrilled to add PSU parent to my PSU resume. We would not be in the town we are located, contributing socially, economically, and through service, without our employment. However, for the first time in over 3 decades of affiliation I am angry with and embarrassed by my institution.

The budget mandate from the Board of Trustees, and the subsequent action by the President, has created a dire situation:

- Instead of focusing on reduced state funding and horrendous administrative bloat, we are cutting campus budgets which are already woefully lean. If anything, we should be viewed as models of efficiency with our lower pay and disproportionately vast responsibilities.
- Those that can look elsewhere for jobs are. These are often our newest, sought-after, most enthusiastic, and successful faculty and staff.
- The timeline seems artificially accelerated with arbitrary endpoints. The process is not transparent and those of us already exhausted from overwork are being asked to serve on multiple committees to provide input (more labor) to a system which is likely going to destroy the campuses as they are.
- Campuses serve a disproportionately high number of Pennsylvania residents and first-generation college students. We must continue to serve them.
- Morale is the lowest I have ever seen across the University. Our leadership is not following its own PSU principles.
- We are hearing about innovation hubs and sharing faculty expertise, which sounds efficient and practical, but the answer seems to be online classes. This is so out-of-touch with current student desire and success. While the flexibility to take an occasional class online is sought after by my students and advisees, they universally don't want only classes taught by non-resident instructors. Look to the crumbling state system, which has students in expensive dorm rooms while zooming into classes that give them little sense of connection. Our campus strengths are in our deep, connected, and present family-like atmospheres.

This is an historic moment for the Board – they can revisit their budget ultimatums, to resist political pressure, and avoid grandstanding. Instead, you can apply nuanced solutions to untangle decades-long complex budget challenges while upholding the values of the University. The alternative is abandoning the land-grant mission upon which we are founded.