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## UA3/9/7 State Budget Update

WKU President's Office - Ransdell

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## State Budget Update

Fellow Faculty, Staff, and Students:

I have spent much of the last few weeks meeting one-on-one with legislators in both the House and Senate and in ongoing discussions with Governor Bevin and his staff. Today, I testified before the Kentucky House Budget Review Subcommittee on Postsecondary Education. My message: **Eliminate the proposed nine percent cuts in state appropriations to Kentucky's public universities.**

WKU's successful transformation has come as a result of your hard work to impact academic quality, your engagement in economic development and quality of life initiatives, and our collective efforts to rebuild the campus infrastructure. The private support from our alumni, friends, and corporate partners has been key to reaching our shared goals. Unfortunately, however, support from the state has simply not kept pace. For example, in 1998, WKU's state appropriation was \$89.7 million. Today it is \$74.6 million, and that includes \$4.9 million to support the Gatton Academy of Math and Science. That's an astonishing decline in state support. To put it another way, state funding has declined by nearly \$3,000 per student at WKU since 1998, or one-third. Nationally, most states are reinvesting in higher education while Kentucky is retrenching further.

I am proud that our Student Government Association spent a day in Frankfort this week meeting with legislators to make their case for state support. My colleagues from across the state and I are working together to compel legislators to reconsider these devastating cuts, and I have asked our alumni to join us in that effort by contacting their legislators on our behalf. You may reach out to legislators as well, on your own time and using your personal phone and email, by calling the legislative message line at **800-372-7181** ([click here](#) to find your legislator), and ask them to **eliminate the proposed nine percent cuts to WKU.**

On the heels of cuts over the last decade, these additional cuts will significantly impact our efforts to drive economic development, respond to workforce development needs, improve the quality of life in our region, offer students meaningful opportunities for civic and community engagement, and address compensation.

I will continue to devote as much time and energy as it takes through this legislative session to achieve a more favorable position for WKU in the state budget. I will keep you updated as this process unfolds over the next few weeks.

Sincerely,  
Gary A. Ransdell



Dr. Gary A. Ransdell | President