



BOARD OF REGENTS OF
THE UNIVERSITY SYSTEM OF GEORGIA

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University System of Georgia Faculty Council
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The resolution of the USG Faculty Advisory Council regarding presidential salaries was received and reviewed seriously and thoroughly as always. Certainly your expressed concern about and support for faculty and staff salary increases is readily embraced by this office and the Board. Without question, faculty and staff are essential contributors to the education mission of our respective institutions. In fact the Board and my office have pressed for such increases in the two most recent legislative sessions. That priority will again be expressed and aggressively pursued in the upcoming 2016 session of the Georgia General Assembly.

However, I reject your devaluing the role of presidential leadership in the effective guidance of the educational and fiscal performance of our respective colleges and universities. I did not take lightly my recommendation to the Board of Regents regarding presidential compensation. In two specific instances I concluded in the case of these presidents who were aggressively being recruited by other institutions that a substantial response was required and justified to retain their outstanding leadership at two of USG's very best institutions. The BOR readily agreed. By the way, the respective foundations of Georgia Tech and Georgia State University (GSU) advocated for and supported the Board's decision. In fact in the case of GSU, the Foundation provided 100 percent of the presidential increase.

Furthermore, I should point out that there are parts of the resolution that would inhibit our ability to make a stronger case for higher pay for faculty. For example, linking recent budget reductions at some institutions to state budget cuts is not entirely accurate. Reductions that have occurred most recently are related to significant enrollment declines at those institutions rather than state budget cuts. For several years the Governor and General Assembly have fully funded our formula, which is driven largely by enrollment and credit hours. For institutions where these are declining, revenues will decline and hence budgets must be adjusted accordingly.

In addition, higher faculty salaries will require additional revenues, but the resolution calls for a tuition and fee freeze. Each of the last four years, we have kept the vast majority of our institutions at 2.5 percent increases in order to lessen the burden on students. Tuition and fees are a critical revenue stream at each institution. Clearly there is an absence of understanding of the budgeting process at the system and institutional level. I take responsibility for that lack of understanding; I do not say this to in any way imply a criticism of the faculty and staff. In that regard it may be helpful to arrange a briefing for you on the system and state budgets, the recent fiscal history of Georgia and how the budget process works so that you have a more complete picture of how these factors impact the funds available to each campus.

We may have differences of opinion, yet I believe we would all agree we are stronger in the long run by working together. I look forward to our having thoughtful discussion at the October 24 meeting in Savannah. Thank you again for sharing your views.

Sincerely,

Henry M. Huckaby
Chancellor