

NEWS

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**CONTACT: Rep. Tom
Flanigan
573-751-5458**

Statement from House Budget Chairman Tom Flanigan Regarding Funding for the University of Missouri System

JEFFERSON CITY, Mo. – State Rep. Tom Flanigan, chairman of the House Budget Committee, released the following statement regarding funding for the University of Missouri System in the FY 2017 budget:

“The committee substitute for House Bill 2003 has \$8,076,196 less in state aid for the University of Missouri System than in the current year’s budget. The decision to further reduce appropriations for the system was not made lightly and recent events have proved to Missourians that existing performance measures are not the only indicators of a university’s performance. Furthermore, the General Assembly can and should look beyond traditional indicators in determining how much is appropriated to our universities.

The House will not appropriate a lump sum to the system for FY17. Instead we will budget to seven different lines in HB 2003 (University of Missouri – Columbia, University of Missouri – Kansas City, University of Missouri – St. Louis, Missouri University of Science and Technology, Extension, endowed professorships, and the “UM System”). The reduction is made in two places. First, UMC’s appropriation is reduced \$402,059, or the equivalent of three salaried positions (Dr. Melissa Click’s position, one division chair in communications, and the dean of arts and science). Second, the reduction in the state appropriation is also targeted to administration. It remains to be seen if effective leadership is in place to move the system forward. The UM System primarily consists of the board of curators, president’s office and other multi-campus functions and is cut \$7,674,137 (approximately half the reported amount for FY16).

The committee substitute does not make the reductions only about Dr. Melissa Click and her actions. For several months legislators have had stories relayed to us from current and past students, staff, and faculty of a vast bureaucracy that rivals the Pentagon in terms of red tape and delays. Additionally, appropriators are deeply concerned with the faculty waiver process, how conflicts of interest are addressed, and the inability to terminate employees who participate in conduct unbecoming the University of Missouri and our state. The committee substitute ensures administrators, not students, feel the pain of these budget actions.

Further budget actions may still await the University of Missouri as changes can be made in both House and Senate committees and as both chambers move to third read House Bill 2003. The cuts we have put forward are intended to send a strong message to the administration without harming our students, who deserve better.”