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**Bowie State University  
Fiscal Year 2021 Capital Budget  
Response to Department of Legislative Services Budget Analysis**

**Senate Budget & Taxation Committee  
Capital Budget Subcommittee  
Senator Douglas J.J. Peters, Chair  
March 3, 2020**

**House Appropriations Committee  
Capital Budget Subcommittee  
Delegate Mark S. Chang, Chair  
March 11, 2020**

Members of the capital budget subcommittees, thank you for the opportunity to offer comments on the Governor's capital budget proposal for Bowie State University. We are pleased that the FY 2021 budget provides continued funding for the planning phase for Bowie State's new Martin Luther King, Jr. Communication Arts and Humanities Building, replacing a 47 year old facility that and has been the source of numerous problems for far too long. We look forward to continuing the design process of this critically important project.

Bowie State University's Strategic Plan, entitled *Racing to Excellence*, is anchored in three main priorities: Achieving Academic Excellence, Promoting Student Success, and Ensuring the Long-term Viability of the Institution. In order for the university to meet our goals we must replace outdated facilities with state-of-the-art ones suitable for 21<sup>st</sup> century teaching and learning. Replacing the current Martin Luther King Jr. building is, therefore, a top priority.

Built in 1973 and never renovated, the current MLK building houses our Departments of Communications, English and Modern Languages, History and Government and Military Science (ROTC). It is also home to our television studio and radio station. It is by far our most heavily

used academic building because every BSU student must take general education classes held in the facility. Yet it is woefully inadequate. The problems with this building are numerous:

- Structural problems and cracking floor slabs
- Outdated heating, ventilation and air conditioning system
- Bathrooms not ADA accessible
- Electrical systems outdated
- Elevator not ADA compliant and frequently out-of-service
- Small classroom spaces which do not support proper academic instruction
- Auditorium used for major convocations is too small and is not ADA-compliant

Recently, the building has been experiencing crumbling concrete and water intrusion at the stair tower joints. The following images are typical of the degradation in these areas of the building.



CRUMBLING CONCRETE – February 2020



LOOSE OVERHEAD CONCRETE – February 2020



WATER INTRUSION AT STAIR TOWERS – February 2020

We have cordoned-off and secured these areas and hired a Structural Engineer to review these areas of the building and provide recommendations for remedial repairs. The firm will provide quarterly inspections of these areas and will provide any additional recommendations for needed repairs to maintain safe operation of the facility. These recent developments underscore the urgency of replacing this facility.

The new building will be 183,634 square feet and feature active learning classrooms and collaborative informal student study space. The specialized class laboratories include audio/video editing and demonstration spaces for media production, broadcast/print journalism, public relations, language, literacy and writing as well as history, government, and geographic information systems laboratories. The building will also house the administrative functions of each of the departments with general support space and amenities. Specific features include:

- flexible and collaborative learning environments
- specialized class laboratories
- space for student support services
- 1,500-seat auditorium / lecture hall
- administrative space to support interdisciplinary faculty
- professional media production facilities for the University's television and radio stations.

Enrollment at Bowie State continues at levels above 6,000. At these enrollment levels and the expectation of continued increases, it is imperative that we replace this facility as soon as possible. I am grateful that funding has been provided in the five-year Capital Improvement Program (CIP) to allow us to continue with design process.

Our goal is to open the facility for classes in the fall of 2024. However, as currently proposed, the CIP does not support our goal. Indeed, the project schedule and funding reflected in the proposed current five-year plan undermines our efforts to complete this project in the face of growing enrollment and continued serious problems with the current structure.

Although the FY 2021 budget provides funding to continue the planning/design process, the proposed funding schedule for construction will not allow us to complete the facility in time for move-in and occupancy in fall 2024 as planned. No funding is provided in FY 2022, so this project will take at least six years to complete.

The university needs approximately \$1.8 million in FY 2022 to ensure completion of the project in time for the fall 2024 semester. We are not requesting an increase in the overall funding for this project, but rather that the construction funding to be moved up to begin in FY 2022 as the university and Board of Regents have always requested.

I respectfully ask that this project be funded within the schedule recommended by the Board of Regents. In light of the recent serious problems with the current building, we absolutely cannot afford any delay this project.

Looking ahead, we are in the process of updating our Facilities Master Plan to align it with our Strategic Plan. The updated Master Plan will inform our capital priorities, and key among them is the Thurgood Marshall Library, a 166,869 square-foot inferior structure built in 1977. Our students and faculty deserve 21<sup>st</sup> century, first-class academic facilities. The workforce demands it and our growth and competitiveness depend greatly upon it.

I thank the Governor and the General Assembly for the support Bowie State University has received for its capital improvements. I urge your support of full funding for our new Communication Arts and Humanities Building.

### **Response to DLS Recommendations**

1. Approve \$6.1 million in general obligation bond funds to complete planning for the Communication Arts and Humanities Building at Bowie State University.

RESPONSE: The University agrees with this recommendation.

2. Approve the deauthorization of \$3,500,000 in general obligation bonds appropriated in the Maryland Consolidated Capital Bond Loan of 2016 for the New Natural Sciences Center.

RESPONSE: The University agrees with this recommendation.