



Office of the Governor

JIM GIBBONS
GOVERNOR

September 30, 2008

Chancellor James Rogers
Nevada System of Higher Education
5550 W. Flamingo Rd., Ste. C-1
Las Vegas, NV 89103

Dear Chancellor Rogers,

Thank you for your latest round of letters advocating against any spending reductions whatsoever in the budget of the Nevada System of Higher Education (NSHE). I continue to be perplexed by your apparent attitude that the economic downturn is being relished and is seen as a long-awaited opportunity to slash budgets. That is simply not the case.

As I've pointed out to you before, I proposed and signed historic increases in NSHE's budget in 2007. Were it not for the economic downturn, those increases would have remained intact. However, I firmly believe that the State must live within its means, just as every Nevadan is required to do. With less revenue comes the need for less spending. That means budgets will be reduced in the upcoming biennium, not only in Higher Education, but in other areas of the state budget as well. I appreciate your zealous advocacy for NSHE, but if NSHE were held harmless, as you suggest, that would mean even deeper cuts to K-12 education, public safety, corrections and health care. Surely your efforts would be better spent identifying appropriate and responsible spending reductions rather than continuing to claim that not a penny can be spared from NSHE.

While we can all agree that a sound higher education system is of vital importance to Nevada, I hope you'll agree that cutting deeper into other state services to maintain spending in higher education is not a wise policy.

To that end, my administration has been holding budget hearings with every state agency to identify responsible ways to reduce spending. It bears noting that Legislative staff has been in attendance at every meeting. This process has resulted in positive and

productive ways to increase government efficiency. I certainly hope that NSHE will similarly examine ways to cope with reduced revenues.

When revenues turn around, as we all know they will eventually, I will advocate for the restoration of appropriate spending for NSHE and other vital state services. But until then, we need to tighten our belts and get through this without further burdening the hardworking taxpayers of the state of Nevada. I invite you to provide my office with specific, responsible ways to reduced spending in higher education, rather than simply stating that we have no choice but to increase taxes.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jim Gibbons". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Jim" being particularly prominent.

JIM GIBBONS
Governor

cc: Senator William Raggio
Speaker Barbara Buckley
Senator Steven Horsford
Assemblywoman Heidi Gansert
Senator Mike McGinness
Senator Mark Amodei
Senator Bernice Mathews
Senator Joe Heck
Senator Bob Coffin
Assemblyman Bernie Anderson
Assemblywoman Sheila Leslie
Assemblyman Kelvin Atkinson
Assemblywoman Bonnie Parnell
Assemblyman David Parks