Dear Friend of USF,

Thank you for your interest and advocacy on behalf of the USF System.

In addition to the work that USF does at the Capitol, the Board of Trustees and our local campus boards’ ability to direct precious resources to the areas of greatest need during this economic downturn is critical to the health and well-being of our students, faculty, staff, and the communities we serve. We will be working hard over the final six weeks of session to ensure that the chamber’s initial spending plan and implementing legislation that are favorable for state universities, including the USF System.

Currently, the Senate is proposing to spend roughly $240 million more in higher education compared to the House. This could have significant implications for our universities, including the University of South Florida System and the University of Tampa. The Conference Committee will be the “General Appropriations Act for Fiscal Year 2011-2012” for each state university’s spending plan, which is the annual budget that the legislature passes and the governor signs.

Today is Day 22 of the 60-day legislative session. The House and Senate are well underway in crafting their respective budget proposals. After each chamber has deliberated and passed their own proposal, the leaders of each chamber will attempt to secure a “Conference Committee” where both chambers can negotiate a compromise bill that is acceptable to both chambers. However, there is always a chance that one chamber’s initial budget plan and implementing legislation that are favorable for state universities, including the USF System, and one or the other will prevail. It is critical that we work with the leaders of both chambers to ensure that a “Conference Committee” is formed in which both chambers have a seat. We will be working hard over the final six weeks of session to ensure this happens.

The Conference Committee will review the spending plans and legislation that have been passed by both the Senate and House for each state university, including the University of South Florida System and the University of Tampa. The Conference Committee will be the “General Appropriations Act for Fiscal Year 2011-2012” for each state university’s spending plan, which is the annual budget that the legislature passes and the governor signs.

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