



TOPIC: Response to the 2011 Joint Chairmen's Report Language: Board of Regents Report on a Study Examining the Advantages and Disadvantages of Merging University of Maryland, College Park (UMCP) and University of Maryland, Baltimore (UMB)

COMMITTEE: Committee of the Whole

DATE OF COMMITTEE MEETING: December 9, 2011

SUMMARY: This action item considers Board of Regents acceptance of the report, the Board's endorsement of the University of Maryland Strategic Alliance, and the charge to the Chancellor to begin work with the presidents of UMCP and UMB to develop the Alliance's administrative structure, budget requirements, and specific initial initiatives.

Language on page 127 of the 2011 Joint Chairmen's Report requests the University System of Maryland Board of Regents (Board) to submit a study "examining the advantages and disadvantages of merging the University of Maryland, College Park (UMCP) and the University of Maryland, Baltimore (UMB) . . . including any issues related to merging the two institutions under a single University of Maryland." The Board response is due to the General Assembly by December 15, 2011. This report summarizes the study process undertaken by the Board in fulfilling the Joint Chairmen's request, as well as the information gleaned from that effort. The report concludes with the Board's decisions as well as a description of those factors and outcomes it considered relevant in reaching its decisions. Included in the report appendices are the key information documents generated by various institution-based work groups assigned to study specific questions or issues. These documents, along with the testimony and opinions of dozens of interested stakeholders, form the basis for many of the analyses and findings included in this report.

At the start of the study process, the University System of Maryland (USM) Board of Regents approved a work plan for the study. The plan was based on discussions with the institutional leadership, state officials, and other stakeholders; advice from national higher education leaders; case studies of actual and proposed mergers in other states; and USM's own experience with institutional mergers and reorganizations. The subjects of the study, University of Maryland, College Park and University of Maryland, Baltimore were charged with identifying and assessing the potential opportunities, threats, risks and rewards of a merger or its alternative. To ensure that no institutional viewpoint was left unheard, the study was structured so that all USM institutions and constituencies that potentially could be affected by a merger had the opportunity to participate. The Board's work plan also called for considerable public and stakeholder input. Two public hearings were held resulting in considerable written and verbal testimony, discussions and interviews were held with elected and public officials, business executives, and community leaders. Numerous letters were received and extensive commentary was received via the study's web site.

The Board followed a structured framework to develop its views of the study results, and their conclusions and decisions. In arriving at consensus, Board members worked within an agreed upon set of guiding principles. Drawing on the USM Strategic Plan and language in the 1988 legislation authorizing the formation of the System, the principles are:

- Maintain alignment between the education and economic development policy goals of the State and the priorities of USM as expressed in its strategic plan.
- Optimize the ability of USM to address State goals within the resources available to it.
- Increase the level of collaboration between UMCP and UMB—and among all USM institutions—to maximize education, research, and service opportunities.
- Enhance the potential of UMCP and UMB to perform at the level of their respective aspirational peer institutions.
- Preserve the commitment to excellence, access, and completion across USM, as a system of complementary institutions with distinct missions.
- Ensure an organizational and governance structure within USM that best enables USM to advance the quality of its institutions, respond to the needs of the state and its communities, and be accountable to the State for the effective and efficient stewardship of its resources.

RECOMMENDATION: That the Board of Regents adopt the report and submit it to the Maryland General Assembly; that the Board endorse the concept of the University of Maryland Strategic Alliance; that the Board charge the Chancellor and the Presidents of UMCP and UMB to return to the Board with a detailed plan for creating the Alliance by March 1, 2012; and that the Chancellor and the two Presidents consider whether the University of Maryland Strategic Alliance appropriately reflects the goals and scope of the alliance, or if some other name would better describe the enterprise.

BOARD ACTION:

DATE:
