



**UNIVERSITY SYSTEM  
of MARYLAND**

**University System of Maryland  
FY 2023 Operating Budget  
Coppin State University  
Chancellor’s Response to the Department of Legislative Services’ Analysis**

**Senate Budget & Taxation  
Subcommittee on Education, Business and Administration  
Senator Nancy King  
Friday, February 25, 2022**

**House Appropriations  
Subcommittee on Education and Economic Development  
Delegate Ben Barnes  
Thursday March 3, 2022**

***Page 22*—The University System of Maryland Office should comment on whether CSU’s State fund appropriation is appropriate, when excluding Chapter 41 funding, given its size and mission when compared to other University System of Maryland institutions and if steps are needed to decrease the ratio of State funds per FTES.**

**USMO Response:**

First and foremost, it’s important to note that the University System of Maryland (USM) endorses the governor’s allowance and appreciates the legislature’s historically strong support of the USM’s mission and work. Moreover, we share the state’s vision of Coppin State University (CSU) as a vital anchor institution for West Baltimore and its people.

The USM is responsible for—and committed to—ensuring that Maryland residents have access to System institutions and to a high-quality education at an affordable cost. CSU is critical to our access obligation.

The student mix at Coppin is different than at most USM universities. Coppin serves differently prepared, multigenerational students, from a variety of cultural and racial backgrounds. The average age of a Coppin undergraduate (26) is much higher than it is at traditional universities, and many of CSU’s students must meet full-time work and family

obligations alongside their education. In addition, the majority of CSU's students are Pell grant recipients, which means they have no family wealth to pay for higher education.

As noted in the analysis, despite these challenges, CSU's six-year graduation rate has steadily improved for first-time, full-time students. In fact, its 2014 graduation rate nearly doubles the rate recorded seven years earlier. Additionally, Coppin's eight-year graduation rates for both Pell-eligible and ineligible students surpassed 50 percent.

These improvements in student success would not be possible without state-subsidized access to higher education. Coppin serves its low-income community with the System's lowest tuition rates. It is, in fact, Maryland's most affordable four-year institution. As such, the tuition revenue CSU generates is limited, and it therefore requires an investment of state appropriations.

As the analysis shows, Coppin's state funding per student is higher than it is for other USM institutions. However, the proportion of low-income students at Coppin is also higher than at those institutions. Coppin's ability to provide affordable, high-quality education requires appropriating the state funds necessary to accomplish its mission.

And Coppin's mission *is* important. CSU plays a central role in the economic revitalization of its West Baltimore community. It serves as "an oasis for the educational, economic, recreational, and cultural needs" of Maryland's people by sharing its expertise in academic disciplines, professional fields, and the fine and performing arts.

Again, the USM recognizes the immense value of Coppin to Baltimore, to Maryland, and to its citizens, and fully supports the state funds appropriated by the governor and the legislature to accomplish Coppin's mission.