

**Statement from the Greater Pittsburgh Chamber of Commerce
to the Pennsylvania Senate Appropriations, Education and Agricultural
and Rural Affairs Committees
Wednesday, October 25, 2017
Harrisburg Capitol Building
Hearing Room 1, North Office Building
Harrisburg, PA 17120**

On behalf of the Greater Pittsburgh Chamber of Commerce, we urge support for funding our state-related universities, and specific to us, the University of Pittsburgh.

As an organization whose mission is to improve the economy and quality of life for southwestern Pennsylvania, our businesses here rely on the pipeline of talent that the University of Pittsburgh produces for our growing workforce and our entire region benefits from the University's role as a critical economic engine. By way of further elaboration:

- Pitt supports 29,583 jobs in Pennsylvania.
- Pitt contributes nearly \$4 billion in economic activity statewide, generating \$26 for every \$1 of appropriation received.
- Pitt brought in \$765 million in outside research funding last year, and its research enterprise overall generates an additional \$1.4 billion in the Commonwealth.
- Pitt contributed \$71.7 million in 2016 in charitable and volunteer service donations.

It should be noted that two-thirds of Pitt undergrads come from Pennsylvania. Should funding be delayed or eliminated, those students could seek educational opportunities in neighboring states and may be less likely to return to Pennsylvania after graduation. Additionally, Pitt currently receives about \$147 million from the state, but spends about \$53 million to offset costs for in-state students. This state support now is on par with 1999 (without adjusting for inflation) when it was \$142.2 million.

We would also note that Penn State is a critical part of our education and economic community via regional campuses and the extension program.

Finally, we would be remiss if we did not highlight the fact that it is our strong belief that one of our region's competitive advantages in the competitive bid process for the Amazon HQ2 project is our region's world class university system – and critical public investment in many of those universities is central to that excellence.

For all of these reasons, we strongly urge you to finalize funding for Pitt, Penn State, Temple and Lincoln as soon as possible. This will reinforce to our students and our businesses that we are, in fact, a world-class state with first-class talent, worthy of impactful investment. Thank you.