

Morgan State  
University

Maryland's  
Public Urban  
University

## Legislative Testimony

Presented to:

**House Subcommittee on  
Capital Budget  
and**

**Senate Subcommittee on  
Capital Budget**

**March 2013**

**Dr. David Wilson  
President**



**MORGAN STATE UNIVERSITY**

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## Testimony

### Fiscal Year 2014 Capital Budget

#### Morgan State University

David Wilson, President

March 2013



David Wilson,  
President

*Thank you for the opportunity to appear before the Committee in support of the Governor's capital budget recommendation and to respond to any questions you may have.*

#### Projects in Process

Morgan is very appreciative of the capital investments the State has made in the University over the last several years. The value added to the educational experience of our students cannot be overstated and the ongoing investments are moving us closer to our goal of providing state-of-the-art teaching and research environments for our students.

The last few months have been especially rewarding, with the completion of the new Center for the Built Environment and Infrastructure Studies (CBEIS) on the north campus and with the expansion of our campus to the west across Hillen Road with the groundbreaking ceremony for the new School of Business and Management Complex. In addition, the architect for the new Behavioral and Social Sciences facility, also to be located on the west campus, has been selected. The implementation of each of these projects addresses long-time instruction and research space deficiencies.

Students in the School of Architecture and Planning, for the first time since the late 1970s, are occupying discipline-specific learning environments with

up-to-date technology, providing them with the necessary training and hands-on experience to compete effectively in the workforce. The Center for the Built Environment and Infrastructure Studies includes one of only two earthquake simulators on the East Coast. These and other specialized laboratories not only enhance the quality of education of our students, but also provide opportunities for advanced research for our faculty and for collaborations with other institutions. The Center is also home to the departments of Transportation Studies and Civil Engineering. Shared use promotes interchange among these interrelated disciplines and better prepares our students to tackle the ever increasing challenges related to the built environment.

As with the CBEIS building, the new School of Business and Management and the new Behavioral and Social Sciences facilities will provide teaching and research environments that simulate real-life situations and provide our students with the necessary training and experience to compete in and make meaningful contributions to the global workforce. The new School of



Business and Management, to be completed in two (2) years, includes smart classrooms, a trading floor simulator room and demonstration space, none of which is possible in the existing facility because of the size and configuration of the building.

Likewise, constraints in the size and configuration of the Jenkins Behavioral Science building preclude its conversion into the types of spaces to train and support research effectively. The lack of these spaces has constrained the educational experience and research efforts of our students and faculty. The new facility, in the design phase, will consist of up-to-date teaching and research space to support these disciplines, including a forensic anthropology lab, a human factors research lab, neuropsychology, and an animal testing lab. None of these labs currently exist, and we are very excited that we will finally be able to provide our Behavioral and Social Science students with meaningful and competitive learning environments and the infrastructure necessary to further advance our research capacity.

### **A Strategic Plan for Future Growth**

The University's Strategic Plan has five important goals that focus the direction of the University to assist the State in increasing the percentage of the college-age population earning a college degree to 55 percent by 2025. The straightforward goals that drive the programs and associated needs of the University are as follows:

- Enhancing Student Success
- Enhancing Morgan's Status as a Doctoral Research University
- Improving and Sustaining Morgan's Infrastructure and Operational Processes
- Growing Morgan's Resources
- Engaging the Community

Appropriately placed, Student Success is our number one priority, and we are making substantial strides. Consistent with our recently completed Strategic Plan, we are enhancing our focus on improving retention and graduation rates. For instance, our second-year retention rate increased from 68 to 73 percent this past academic school year, and our graduation rate increased from 28.9 to 30.4 percent. Specifically, there was an 11 percent increase from the previous academic year in the number of undergraduate degrees awarded and a 22.6 percent increase in the number of graduate degrees awarded, increasing to 902 and 292, respectively.

The University will continue to ensure that it effectively utilizes resources available to it to provide for the educational needs of our students to ensure they can compete for the best jobs or access the best schools in the nation when pursuing an advanced degree. Certainly, facilities have and will continue to play a critical role in the rate of advancement at the University. Continued investment in the University's facilities will position it to further enhance the quality of education while also enabling it to compete for grants and contracts. The State's







investment is the cornerstone of Morgan's mission, which encourages research valuable to the City and ultimately spurs economic and community development within the region. As Morgan's Strategic Plan is realized over the next decade, the University plans to grow from 8,000 to 12,000 students, while ultimately doubling the number of undergraduate degrees. Critical to attracting, retaining and graduating an increasing number of individuals from diverse backgrounds is an attractive array of programs with complementary facilities.

#### **Urgent Need to Advance New Student Services Facility**

Improving customer service is a top priority as the University seeks to maintain and increase its market share of the most talented students. Unfortunately, the housing of student service functions (i.e., admissions, recruitment, registrar, bursar, financial aid, etc.) in an old retrofitted hospital (Montebello) severely constrains our ability to attract and appropriately service our students. This facility is the first point of contact for prospective and new students and their parents, and where students must return to do business throughout their college career. The condition of the building marginalizes other outstanding programs and services offered at the University. The facility is nearly 60 years old; and, consequently, all of the building systems have exceeded their useful life, creating concerns with its continued safe operation. There are constant service interruptions due to the aging building systems. For example, during student registration, the

computer system frequently breaks down because of the inadequate electrical system. The mechanical system does not provide adequate heating or cooling. There are persistent sewage leaks resulting from deteriorating interior and exterior lines. Fires have erupted in the building, causing the building to be evacuated. There is massive water damage due to the age of the piping which has been continually patched over time.

Not only is the facility visually depressing but functionally inadequate and increasingly unsafe because of the aging and unreliable building systems. In addition to desperately needing a replacement facility before there is a catastrophic system failure, we also need to move the core student service support systems from the periphery of the campus to the center. In that regard, we are about to demolish our old library, which is located in the center of the campus, providing the opportunity to locate student services to this convenient location. Unfortunately, the State's Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) does not provide for design funding for the new student support service building until FY 2016. This means that the earliest that reasonable accommodations can be available is 2021. Thus, we will have to remain in Montebello for another eight years. Given the age and condition of the old Montebello Hospital, this may not be possible. We are concerned because a catastrophic break in one of the major building systems is inevitable, which could result in a shutdown of the entire building and associated services.



### Addition to the Governor's Request

We were hopeful that funds could be added to the FY 2014 capital budget so that we can initiate design for a new student services building. This will put us on schedule to begin construction upon completion of the demolition of the old library. Of the \$6 million design cost, we would only need

\$3.0 million in FY 2014 to enable us to initiate the project.

### Governor's Capital Budget Recommendations

We are requesting your support of the Governor's capital budget recommendation for the projects included in FY 2014 as summarized below.

Project	Phase	Recommendation
New Behavioral Sciences	Planning	\$ 297,000
New School of Business & Connecting Bridge	Construction & Equipment	\$50,514,000
Soper Demolition	Construction	\$ 3,850,000
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>\$54,661,000</b>

Provided below for your information is a summary of each project.

### Jenkins Replacement (Behavioral & Social Sciences)

The University is requesting the balance of the funds required to complete detailed design of a new Jenkins at the Northwood site. Constructed in 1974 and never renovated, the building is in deplorable condition. The need to address the numerous building inadequacies has been long recognized by the State. It was included in the State's CIP as far back as FY 1991. Conditions have only worsened as the building has continued to age and deteriorate. Many of the building systems are failing and in need of replacement, and the building does not meet current day building codes. The building lacks modern technology, and there are no smart classrooms, dedicated instructional or

research labs. Much of the built-in equipment is obsolete. With the growth in programs, research and changing technologies, it is becoming increasingly difficult to respond to academic needs. The replacement facility will be located next to the new School of Business and Management on the west side of the campus. The new facility will support the disciplines of Psychology, Sociology, Economics, Geography, History, Political Science and International Studies.

### New School of Business and Management Complex & Connecting Bridge

Construction is currently underway, and this request provides for the 2nd phase of construction and the 1st phase of equipment funding for the new School of Business







and Management Complex. Also included are funds for the construction of a connecting bridge from the Morgan Commons to the new facility on the Northwood site. The bridge will be constructed by extending the sidewalk in the area of the Richardson Library, Hill Field House and the tennis courts to connect the new School

of Business and Management to the center of the campus. Construction funding was preauthorized in the 2012 General Assembly Session. The facility will provide modern instructional environments for the School of Business and Management, including Hospitality Management, which has never had discipline-specific facilities.

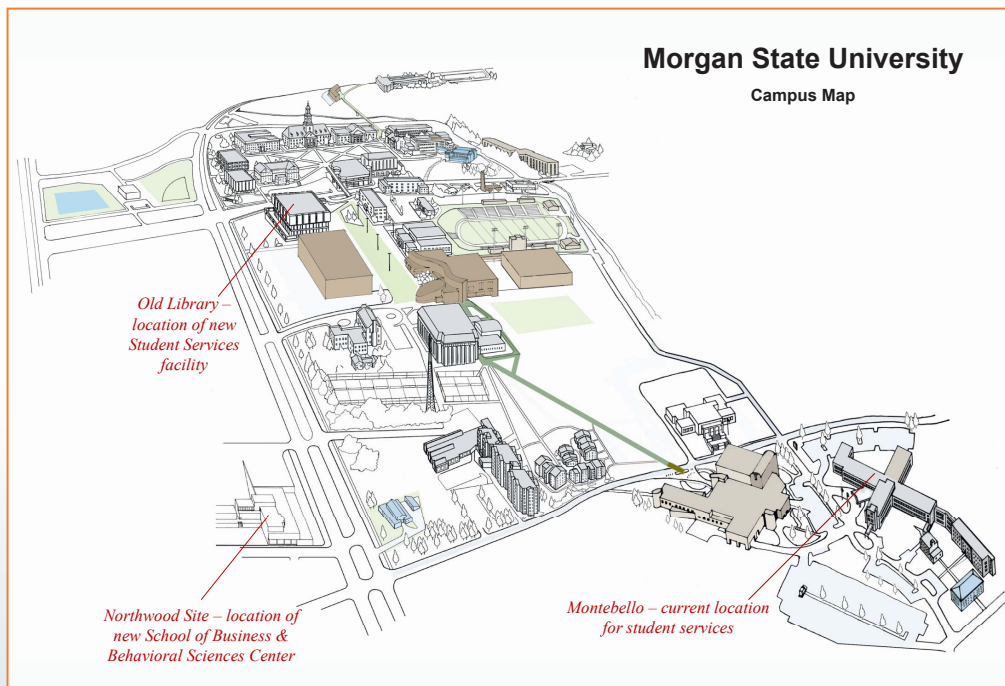




### Soper Demolition

Design is currently underway for the demolition of the old Soper Library. The building has been vacant since 2007, when the new library opened, and the University is anxious to demolish the building and redevelop the site for the new Student Support

Services building. Based on an engineering evaluation, the building cannot be cost-effectively renovated. Demolition is estimated to cost \$6,450,000. This request provides the 1st phase of construction funding for demolition. Demolition is expected to begin in late 2013.



Also, provided on the following page is the response to the analyst's question.

Your full support of the Governor's recommendations would be appreciated.



## Response to Issues and Recommendations Identified in the Department of Legislative Services' Analysis

### SOPER LIBRARY DEMOLITION



**Issue:** The President should comment on how the university will be able to complete the project on schedule given the shortened timeframe to not only design the project but the time needed to put the project out to construction bid.

**Response:** The design contract was approved by the Board of Public Works on March 6, 2013. The architect has agreed to a six-month design schedule (April – October 2013). Bidding for demolition is anticipated to take approximately three months (October – December 2013) with demolition taking approximately six months (June 2014).

#### Recommendations:

1. Approve \$50.5 million in general obligation bond funding to construct and equip the new School of Business Complex and connecting bridge.
2. Approve \$3.9 million in general obligation bond funding to provide construction funds for the demolition of Soper Library.
3. Approve \$0.3 million in general obligation funding to complete the design of the new Jenkins Behavioral and Social Sciences Center.
4. Approve the pre-authorization of \$3 million of general obligation bond funds for fiscal 2015 to complete construction of the new School of Business Complex and Bridge.
5. Approve the pre-authorization of \$2.1 million of general obligation bond funds for fiscal 2015 for the Soper Library Demolition. This pre-authorization, in addition to the proposed authorization of \$3.9 million in fiscal 2014, is necessary to allow the project to be bid for construction in fiscal 2014.

**Response:** The University appreciates the favorable recommendations by the Department of Legislative Services (DLS) and would also appreciate the Committee's approval of funding in FY 2014 as well as the pre-authorizations for FY 2015 in support of the School of Business, the Behavioral and Social Sciences facility and demolition of Soper Library. Thank you for your continued support.









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