



Arizona Board of Regents

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Media Release

Eight hundred plus turn out for Regents meeting to protest proposed budget cuts

Tucson, AZ (Jan. 22, 2009) -- At today's meeting of the Arizona Board of Regents, hundreds of business leaders, students, alumni, and community members turned out to protest the legislature's proposed budget cuts to the university system—the largest audience in the board's history.

During the meeting's call to audience, a format for members of the public to address the board, prominent business, community and student leaders, as well as representatives from alumni, parents and faculty associations voiced their strong concerns about the proposed cuts, citing the devastating affects the cuts would have on local businesses, the state economy, and the future of the Arizona.”

Regent Fred DuVal led with opening remarks, stating “There are watershed moments for states. For Arizona, the Salt River Project and Central Arizona Project—both critical public investments—were such turning points. Today we face another—of equal import to these times—that will have equivalent impacts, if we forgo the investments that enable forward progress.”

Several prominent local business leaders attended and attested to the vital role Arizona's universities play in the state's economy. Raytheon President Taylor Lawrence commented, “The key to growth is technology, the key to technology is innovation, and the key to innovation is education.”

Sarah Smallhouse, president of Thomas R. Brown Foundations and co-chair of *The Coalition for Solutions Through Higher Education*, urged legislators to consider alternatives to the proposed cuts. “The universities have planned for and are prepared to take cuts...[but] the proposal that has been advanced will cripple our state for decades to come...we simply have to be more creative.”

Dr. Tom Grogan, founder of Ventana Medical Systems, added, “The University of Arizona is part of the budget solution, not the problem.” Grogan turned to the large crowd of students standing behind him and predicted, “More wealth (for our state) will come from the people standing here than will be found in the ground of Arizona.”

Students turned out to the meeting by the hundreds.

At the podium, UA Student Body President Tommy Bruce sounded a strong alarm. “We will not and cannot stand for this...these cuts would mangle our universities until they would no longer be viable entities.”

About the Arizona Board of Regents

The Arizona Board of Regents is committed to ensuring access for qualified residents of Arizona to undergraduate and graduate instruction; promoting the discovery, application, and dissemination of new knowledge; extending the benefits of university activities to Arizona's citizens outside the university; and maximizing the benefits derived from the state's investment in education. The Board consists of twelve members: eleven voting and one non-voting student regent. This includes the Governor and Superintendent of Public Instruction as ex-officio members, each serving while they hold office, and two Student Regents. For more information visit www.azregents.edu.

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