



Dear Mr. Chairman and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to testify before you today regarding House Bill 693: University System of Maryland – Designated Growth Institutions – Community Impact Statement.

Towson University opposes this piece of legislation. Towson University currently addresses many of the issues brought up in this legislation every five years through our master planning process. To do this yearly would be very expensive and time consuming. Additionally, this bill implies that Towson University has not planned for the growth we have experienced on campus. I can assure you that Towson University does not take the growth initiative lightly and is constantly working to meet the needs of our students, faculty, staff, the community, region and the state.

In 2003 Towson University was designated the primary growth campus for traditional aged students in the University System of Maryland. The decision was made by the USM Board of Regents for a variety of reasons, including but not limited to:

- 1) Towson University's campus master plan is designed to accommodate 25,000 students.
- 2) Towson University is a comprehensive university offering degrees in high demand fields such as nursing, occupational therapy, teaching, accounting, computer science, etc.
- 3) The State's resources per FTE go further at Towson University than at any other public four-year institution. TU currently receives \$5,427 per FTE, the lowest funding per full-time equivalent student in the State.
- 4) Towson University's reputation and quality have risen over the past decade. The number and quality of applicants continues to increase, making a TU degree a degree in demand. Last year we received 15,700 applications for 2,600 freshmen slots, and we are on pace to exceed that this year.

As the primary designated growth campus for traditional students, Towson University takes this charge seriously. TU's enrollment headcount has increased by 3,285 students over the past five years. With that growth has come detailed planning. Use of facilities, construction of housing, hiring of faculty and student support services are just a few of the considerations that must be addressed. As with any type of growth, come growing pains. To ease these growing pains TU has implemented some innovative practices to use campus resources more efficiently and effectively. These include:



- 1) Increased online offerings, which limit the number of students traveling to campus on a daily basis.
- 2) Setting the goal to triple the number of service learning/internship opportunities for our students, moving the learning environment to our local businesses, hospitals and K-12 classrooms.
- 3) Shortening time to degree, which will also reduce stress on the campus and the surrounding community. To do so, TU piloted a trimester program last summer, with the goal of utilizing our campus resources to their full capacity in non-peak months. We offered classes that are typically more difficult to get into in the spring and fall semesters, such as science and lab courses that limit the number of students in each section. The pilot increased our summer enrollments by 10.2% over the prior three years' average. We plan to market the summer trimester more aggressively this year and expect to see a minimum of an additional 10% increase next year in students using their summer months to earn credits towards their degree.
- 4) We have over 1,900 students at satellite centers around the state including nursing at USM Hagerstown, teacher education at USM Shady Grove, College of Southern Maryland, Howard Community College, multiple K-12 school sites, and most recently we are offering the elementary/special education dual degree at Harford Community College.
- 5) Harford Community College is poised to be one of the largest satellite programs in the coming years. On March 5, 2009 Presidents LaCalle and Caret are signing an MOU for a building to house TU programs on the Harford Community College campus. The projected growth at HCC is 260 FTEs within the next five years.
- 6) This semester TU redesigned our course matrix, returning to the Monday-Wednesday-Friday model allowing us to add an additional 200 course-sections this semester.

As the number of high school graduates has increased the past couple of years, Towson University is proud to fulfill its mission of offering an affordable, accessible, and quality education to our State's citizens. Eighty percent of TU students are from Maryland and 80% stay in Maryland upon graduating. The support of the Governor, the legislature and the USM has enabled TU to successfully meet the demand of our State's families.

The requirements of HB693, by definition, call for Towson University to produce a community impact statement on the ***"EXPECTED IMPACTS OF AND THE PROPOSED MEANS OF MITIGATING THE EXPECTED IMPACTS ON GROWTH FOR THE FOLLOWING ACADEMIC YEAR."*** Given the current budget situation, **Towson University is not slated to grow in fall 2009, therefore this bill is unnecessary.** Our current projections have the fall class coming in at +/- 1% of current enrollment, a target that our admissions team is currently working to achieve. That being said, Towson University works diligently to properly



prepare and successfully execute our plans to accommodate our students, faculty, staff and the community.

Our master planning process best addresses the requirements stated in the bill. Five years ago TU underwent an extensive planning process and produced the 2003 Campus Master Plan. The plan was designed to accommodate 25,000 students on campus with a faculty/staff village built nearest to Charles Street. The plan was vetted with all of the neighborhood organizations and was approved by the USM Board of Regents. As best practices state, Towson University is now conducting the 5 year update to the Campus Master Plan. The original and update both address the road and transportation systems, housing, and the surrounding neighborhoods stated in HB 693.

In 2003, TU spent \$497,885 to develop the master plan. This year, TU is spending approximately \$320,000 to update the plan. In addition, there are four Towson University employees assigned to the working committee, as well as the additional in-house expertise to provide information on mechanical and electrical systems, base maps, etc. Considering the community input meetings, design workshops, plan review meetings and the time associated with managing the project, there will be about 500 staff hours used for this project. Given that this process takes 10 months, repeating this procedure yearly is not the best use of TU's time and the State's resources.

An addendum to this testimony lists the components of the Campus Master Plan that are relevant to the bill. Additionally, as a state institution we are required to go through numerous permits for the construction of our buildings. The most common ones include:

- MD Dept. of Environment for Erosion and Sedimentation Control Permit
- MD Dept. of Environment for Storm water Management Permit (includes joint permits with Army Corps of Engineers for projects that are located in floodplains and wetlands, as applicable)
- MD Dept of Natural Resources for Forest Conservation
- State Fire Marshall for Emergency Access and Egress
- Baltimore County Health Dept for Food Service facilities
- Baltimore County and/or MD State Highway Administration guidelines and requirements for roadway traffic studies and associated design and construction improvements based on traffic studies regarding County and State roads respectively

Additionally, for each capital project we complete a cursory environmental impact assessment statement that gets forwarded to the state clearinghouse.

Campus housing is a major component of the Master Plan as well. TU has around 5,700 students living on campus, including University Village and the Towson Place Apartments which are adjacent to campus property and have no impact on residential neighborhoods. We currently offer all freshmen the opportunity to live on campus; traditionally 85% choose to live in on-campus housing. Once the freshmen demand has been met, sophomores, upperclassmen and transfer students are offered on-



campus housing. Typically students choose to move off campus by their junior year. As our growth continues so will our housing resources. TU is currently developing the West Village precinct, as indicated in our Master Plan, which will add approximately 3,000 additional students living on campus by the end of the phased in development process . There are five phases of housing planned adding 600 new beds every two years. Phase one was completed in August 2008, adding 668 beds to the campus housing inventory. We are currently in development for phase two which will add 650+ beds to campus in August 2010.

West Village five phase housing plan:

PHASE	DATE	# OF BEDS	TYPE
Phase I*	2008	300	Underclassmen – Double Bedroom, Private Bath
Phase I*	2008	300	Underclassmen – Double Bedroom, Private Bath
Phase II**	2010	300	Underclassmen – Double Bedroom, Private Bath
Phase II**	2010	300	Underclassmen – Double Bedroom, Private Bath
Phase III	2012	300	Upperclassmen – Four Single Bedroom Suite
Phase III	2012	300	Upperclassmen – Four Single Bedroom Apartment
Phase IV	2014	300	Underclassmen – Double Bedroom, Private Bath
Phase IV	2014	300	Upperclassmen – Four Single Bedroom Suite
Phase V	2016	300	Upperclassmen – Four Single Bedroom Apartment
Phase V	2016	300	Underclassmen – Double Bedroom, Private Bath

*Phase I opened in August 2008. ** Phase II is currently in development.

Additional requirements of the bill ask for ***“THE INSTITUTION’S SYSTEM OF MONITORING AND TRACKING OF, AND APPLYING APPROPRIATE DISCIPLINE TO, STUDENTS LIVING OFF-CAMPUS WITHIN A 10-MILE RADIUS OF THE CAMPUS.”*** The geographic delineation of this request is quite broad and assuming, especially for a public institution of 21,111 students. Nonetheless, Towson University has been working with the community, county government, and the local elected officials to address off-campus behavior issues. In fall 2006, Towson implemented an Off-Campus Disruptive and Disorderly Conduct Policy that holds students accountable for their behavior off campus. Under this policy if a



neighbor complains to Towson University about a student's house, the University's Off-Campus Student Services Coordinator personally visits the home at question to confirm they are Towson students, issues a first warning, and offers tips for being a courteous, responsible neighbor. After an initial house visit is made a majority of student issues are resolved. At the same time, our current Code of Conduct allows us to charge students for unlawful acts that take place off campus. We can and do hold students accountable for their behaviors.

The Off-Campus Disruptive and Disorderly Conduct Policy does not specify a geographic boundary which provides flexibility in implementation while concentrating on neighborhoods adjacent to the university. The 10-mile radius called for in HB693 is excessive. Towson's Off-Campus Disruptive and Disorderly house statistics are evaluated on a monthly basis and demonstrate a decline of nuisance house complaints received. For example, the fall 2007 semester showed a total of 55 complaints received by December 30, 2007 for a total student enrollment of 19,758. The fall 2008 semester shows a total of 47 complaints received by January 1, 2009 for a student enrollment of 21,111.

One of Towson University's goals for this year is to finalize a local address system and enforcement policy. Here are the steps that have been taken to date:

1. Draft Policy moved forward January 2009;
2. Marketing the requirement throughout spring 2009 (starting at off-campus housing fair 2/25/09);
3. Piloting software spring 2009;
4. Full implementation fall 2009.

Requirement five of the bill asks for "**INVESTMENT IN THE LOCAL COMMUNITY.**" Towson University is a State institution dedicated to its metropolitan mission of teaching, research and public service. As a non-profit, Towson University, our students, faculty and staff have a tremendous economic impact on the Towson area. An economic Impact statement was conducted in 2002. From 2002-2012 RESI estimates that Towson University has a \$9.4 billion total measurable economic impact to the state, 15,400 jobs per year, and \$1.6 billion in federal, state, and local taxes. That was seven years ago; today with the expanded construction and added faculty, staff and students, the impact is assuredly much greater. A study to assess the "investment in the local community" would cost approximately \$16,000 to \$24,000 annually. This figure is from our own self-support entity RESI, which regularly conducts this type of research. Additional investment in the local community occurs daily with our educational, cultural and athletic offerings. Towson University is host to numerous free educational events, seminars, movie screenings and discussion, reading programs, and Saturday morning science series for young people, to name just a few.



To address the requirement of ***“LOCAL GOVERNMENT SERVICES, INCLUDING POLICE, TRANSPORTATION, AND CODE ENFORCEMENT,”*** the Towson University Police Department (TUPD) routinely coordinates with the Baltimore County Police Department (BCPD) not only as standard operating procedure, but also for special initiatives such as:

- Underage Drinking Checks: TUPD works with BCPD to address availability of alcohol to underage persons. In the past, when the county had grant funding, TUPD teamed up with county police to address the problem of underage people purchasing alcohol at liquor establishments near campus.
- TU’s On-going Grant to Hire Off-Duty BCPD Officers for Major Events: TU grants provide two additional BCPD officers to work in the neighborhoods surrounding campus, particularly during special event weekends such as Homecoming, Halloween, Superbowl, and Tigerfest. These officers are on overtime and are above and beyond the normal staffing that would be in place at BCPD, leaving the normal staffing to deal with calls for service and crime in the precinct while the overtime officers deal with complaints related or unrelated to the university’s events. Since implementing this program in fall 2008, arrests and citations to Towson students during these events have been minimal to nearly non-existent and we expect this trend to continue.

Towson University also works closely with Baltimore County Code Enforcement to educate students early about the responsibilities of living off campus:

- Off-Campus Living Fair: Baltimore County Code Enforcement holds exhibit space and provides information to students while they are seeking housing options.
- Following recent county law requiring rental registration licensing, as of January 1, 2009, Towson University does not advertise rental properties to its students for companies or individuals that cannot provide a county-issued license number.
- When possible, Towson University shares database information with code enforcement officials when Towson students or their landlords have been identified as code violators.

Additionally, TU has signed MOUs with other college police departments, Baltimore County and Baltimore City police. Towson University has been and will continue to be a good neighbor with the community and the county in which we reside. Furthermore, it would be improper and assuming that Towson University could assess the impact on county services; this is a task best assessed by the local government.



The final requirement of the bill asks for the impact on personnel: ***“EXCEPT FOR FACULTY, INSTITUTION PERSONNEL NECESSARY TO MEET THE NEEDS OF THE INSTITUTION’S GROWTH.”*** As any institution must do, Towson University assesses and determines the faculty and staff that are necessary for our day-to-day operations. This is done division by division and in these current economic times our campus, as others, must learn how to do more with less. For personnel often times this means expanding duties of some when positions cannot be filled. Towson University’s first charge is to educate our students in a safe, secure environment, and that task always takes precedence.

Thank you for your time and attention to this bill. Towson University respectfully requests that you oppose HB693. Your committee knows the constraints of the State budget best. Towson University’s budget has been cut in FY09 and is constrained for FY10. We carefully prioritize the use of our funds and do not feel producing a yearly impact statement is the best use of the State’s resources. We do produce much of the information requested on a five-year master planning cycle in addition to parking assessments which are conducted annually. Towson University will continue to work with the community and elected officials to increase communication and address their concerns.



Attachment 1:

Towson University's Community Outreach Efforts:

- President Caret and staff regularly meet with elected officials and community leaders representing the Greater Towson Council of Community Associations (GTCCA), both separately and combined, on Towson's off-campus outreach and community relations efforts.
- The Assistant to the President for External Relations attends the monthly GTCCA meeting as well as local Citizens on Patrol meetings on behalf of Towson University.
- Towson University has requested the contact information for the various neighborhood newsletters to communicate information directly about campus updates.
- Since October 2008, Towson University has been offering grants to the Baltimore County Police Department to increase targeted police coverage for certain specified events such as Homecoming, Halloween, TigerFest, and Superbowl. Initial feedback has been positive.
- Towson University officials met with corporate management of local apartment complexes where student behavior problems were increasing. The meetings resulted in management changes and a lease addendum for students renting in these facilities.
- Towson University hosts and co-chairs the monthly University/Community Relations Meetings (a subcommittee of the GTCCA). These meetings are held the Monday before the GTCCA meetings and give the group an opportunity to work on specific issues. Some of the successful initiatives that Towson University has implemented as a result of co-chairing this subcommittee include:
 - Towson established a hotline, the "TU LifeLine," to handle questions, concerns and complaints about Towson students in the community.
 - Towson created an Off-Campus Disruptive and Disorderly Conduct Policy that holds students accountable for their behavior off campus. Under this policy if a neighbor complains to Towson University about a student's house, the University's Off-Campus Student Services Coordinator personally visits the home at question to confirm they are Towson students, issues a first warning, and offers tips for being a courteous, responsible neighbor. After an initial house visit is made the majority of student issues are resolved.
 - The Student Government Association annually leads Town and Gown Cleanup days, in which various students from campus organizations, as well as off-campus student residents, join their neighbors to clean up neighborhoods and sections of downtown Towson. The SGA then hosts a picnic for all program participants.
 - Towson University is exploring a model program using student ambassadors in an off-campus neighborhood (liaise between students and neighbors, report to community association meetings, etc). A pilot program is planned for implementation in fall 2009.
 - Towson University Student Affairs Off-Campus Student Activities developed a civility education program for students in fall 2008.



Attachment 1 (continued)

- Towson is updating its local address system for students and will share the database with Baltimore County Code Enforcement, as requested. The new system will make TU students accountable during the registration process for giving the most accurate local address information. The student policy was drafted in January 2009. Marketing will occur in spring 2009, as well as piloting the software. Full implementation of the system will occur by fall 2009.
- Aligning with the new Baltimore County Rental Registration Policy, effective January 1, 2009 no rentals may be advertised with Towson University unless they are registered through Baltimore County with a rental license number. Towson revised its online web resource to require this information.
- The Towson University Police Department has routinely teamed up with the Baltimore County Police Department, when county grant funding is available, to conduct sting operations at local liquor establishments near campus to address the problem of underage people (in some cases students) purchasing alcohol.
- Towson continues to offer several alcohol education, awareness, and intervention activities throughout the student experience such as Alcohol Edu which is a required online substance abuse education course for entering freshman.
- Towson's off campus behavior/disorderly house statistics are evaluated on a monthly basis and demonstrate a steady decline of nuisance house complaints received.
 - For example, the 2007-2008 academic year showed a total of 55 complaints received by December 30, 2007 for a student enrollment of 19,758. The 2008-2009 academic year showed a total of 47 complaints received by January 1, 2009 for a student enrollment of 21,111.



Attachment 2:

The Campus Master Plan Update Addresses the Following Topics:

1. Campus setting:
 - a. Regional context
 - b. Baltimore Metropolitan area
 - c. Jones Falls Watershed
2. Towson Core and Adjacent neighborhoods and Institutions
3. Defines campus property
4. Land Use
5. Physical development in 10 year increments
 - a. Includes review of Housing
6. Natural character
7. Building analysis
 - a. Building use
8. Facilities renewal
9. Ground analysis
10. Landscape/open space
11. Passive open space
12. Active open space
13. Landscape elements
14. Streetscape
15. Primary streets
16. Natural resources
 - a. Protected and Regulated Resources
 - b. Topography and Relief
 - c. Soils and Geology
 - d. Vegetation resources
 - e. Water resources and wetlands
 - f. Fish and Wildlife habitat
 - g. Landscape ecology
17. Existing transportation network
18. Campus location within the context of the greater Towson community and nearby institutions with regards to transportation
19. Vehicle Circulation
 - a. Existing traffic volumes
 - b. Existing focus areas
 - c. Special events



Attachment 2 (continued)

20. Parking
 - a. Parking inventory
 - b. Parking ratios
 - c. Occupancy
 - d. Operations /policy
 - e. Parking rates
21. Pedestrian Circulation
22. Towson Shuttle Service
23. Utilities Infrastructure/Energy System Assessment
24. Proposed Master Plan
25. Planning principles
 - a. Reflect university mission of teaching and learning
 - b. Strengthen the student learning environment
 - c. Improve community connections
 - d. Create a strong physical identity
26. Concept plan
27. Proposed campus plan
28. Facilities programs and development
 - a. New buildings
29. Facilities Renewal
 - a. Renovations
 - b. Additions
30. Campus Landscape
31. Streetscape Considerations
32. Pedestrian Circulation
33. Gateways
34. Ecological Considerations
35. Master Plan transportation recommendations
36. Guiding principles
37. Vehicle Circulations recommendations
38. Parking recommendations
39. Pedestrian Circulation recommendations
40. Shuttle System Recommendations
41. Utility Infrastructure/Energy Systems
 - a. Key Project Assumptions and University Objectives
42. Property Acquisition Plan