

Statement of Stockton University President Harvey Kesselman for N.J. Senate Committee Hearing

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Galloway , NJ - Stockton University President Harvey Kesselman today testified before the N.J. Senate Budget and Appropriations Committee at its hearing in Trenton. His comments were excerpted from the submitted testimony found below.

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STATEMENT OF STOCKTON UNIVERSITY PRESIDENT

DR. HARVEY KESSELMAN

SENATE BUDGET AND APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE HEARING

MARCH 7, 2016

Good afternoon, Chairman Sarlo and members of

In addition to testimony concerning the Showboat acquisition and sale, I hope this Committee will allow me to highlight the University today, and how we are meeting our

faculty, and staff has been tirelessly working toward this key initiative. The Office of the State Comptroller has already been advised of Stockton's Atlantic City project.

There is solid need and logic for growing in Atlantic City. It is no secret that New Jersey today exports more students to out-of-state higher education institutions than any other state in the nation. The result is that many of our fine students do not return home and a "brain drain" occurs. Specific to Stockton, we are unable to enroll all of the qualified students who apply because we have simply run out of room. Being situated in the Pinelands National Reserve is a two-edged sword. On the positive side, we have a beautiful campus in a pristine setting. On the down side, in order to protect the Pinelands, we are limited in growth and need to find more physical space elsewhere.

We already have a presence in Atlantic City so growing there is a natural evolution. At the same time, having faculty, students and staff in this area will be a catalyst for a renaissance in Atlantic City and allow us to meet the educational needs of many more students.

We are also proud partners in the Stockton Aviation Research and Technology Park (SARTP) that will be located adjacent to Atlantic City International Airport and the William J. Hughes Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) Technical Center. Federal research projects have already been awarded to the SARTP. This Park will provide educational and internship opportunities for our students and will eventually be the home for employers of highly educated and skilled workers with incomes in the \$80,000 to \$100,000 range. This type of facility will be a boon to our students and graduates, as well as the region's economic development.

Stockton's growing public charge requires equitable State support. The proposed FY17 State budget reflects a direct appropriation of \$18.391 million, or \$2,384 per full-time student. This falls far below the average of \$3,900 per full-time student at peer New Jersey senior public institutions. Moreover, the proposed FY17 direct appropriation does not take into consideration Stockton's Atlantic City campus and the anticipated net increase of 1,140 new full-time students at Stockton in the next few years.

Without Legislative action, the direct appropriation to Stockton could decline to \$2,100 per full-time student, as a result of the expected growth in Atlantic City. However, with Legislative support, like Rowan University in Camden, and Rutgers University in New Brunswick, Camden, and Newark, Stockton University will provide much-needed economic activity to Atlantic City while educating New Jersey's future leaders.

Thank you for your support of Stockton University's Atlantic City campus.