



**A Message from Chancellor William E. Kirwan  
to the University System of Maryland Community  
February 18, 2010**

With the 2010 Maryland Legislative Session underway, I want to take a moment to express my heartfelt thanks to all the members of the USM community. I remain incredibly impressed by the dedication and professionalism of our faculty and staff. Under the most difficult conditions, you continue your efforts on behalf of our institutions, our state, and the students we serve. And while the economic climate may slow the rate of our progress, because of your efforts our institutions continue to advance in quality and in their impact on our state's quality of life.

At a time when many states are significantly reducing support for public higher education, Governor O'Malley's FY 2011 budget proposal calls for a modest increase in state support for the USM. The support the USM is receiving in Annapolis is rooted in the way we have managed our budget to focus on our highest academic priorities and create savings where it was possible to do so without impacting the quality of our institutions. In large part because of your hard work and ingenuity, the USM is considered a national model for the way we are responding to the challenging fiscal circumstances our nation is facing.

The Governor's proposed budget for the USM will have significant impact.

- It covers mandatory expenses related to the inflationary costs to operate new facilities and provide employee benefits.
- It includes funding to "buy down" a portion of the USM's proposed 5 percent tuition increase, resulting in a modest 3 percent tuition hike for in-state undergraduate students. This would be the first USM tuition increase in five years, during which time we will have moved from the 6<sup>th</sup> highest tuition in the nation down to 21<sup>st</sup>.
- In addition, the Governor has proposed \$225.6 million in the Capital Improvement Program for the planning, construction, and modernization of academic facilities across the system.

Regrettably, as in FY 2010, the FY 2011 budget for USM does not include salary increases for employees, funding for enrollment growth, or enhancements to important programs. The last few years have been stressful and challenging for everyone. In each of the last two fiscal years we have not only forgone pay increases (both merit and COLA), but also used unpaid furloughs to manage our budget. I know we will continue to work cooperatively as we address any future budgetary challenges.

I look forward to working with our regents; presidents; system-wide faculty, staff and student councils; and other members and friends of the USM community to support full funding of the Governor's proposed FY 2011 budget. And, once again, I thank you for your dedicated service to advancing the quality and impact of your institutions.

*To read the USM's and institutions' legislative testimony throughout the session, please visit <http://www.usmd.edu> and click the link under "Fast Forward."*