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Katherine / Ted -

I know the funding the Senate included in its budget for higher ed deferred maintenance might make a tempting veto target, but let me state a case as to why it shouldn't. I know from serving on the USC Board of Trustees that the Columbia campus alone has hundreds of millions of dollars worth of deferred maintenance needs. There has been no bond bill since 1998 and higher ed funding has declined by over 50% in recent years. The state owns university buildings and has an obligation to maintain them. Also, maintenance will have to be done sooner or later. To do it now will be more effective and less expensive.

With regard to USC Lancaster, I was able to secure \$400,000 in the Senate budget for roof replacements on that campus. Because of the perverse way higher ed is funded in SC, USCL receives the lowest funding per student of almost any institution. For every \$2.75 USC Sumter receives USC Lancaster gets \$1.00 to provide the same education. As a result, their reserve funds are depleted and the funding in the budget is needed to correct some problems with older buildings before they become more pronounced. *USCL is also a special case because of the last \$20MM spent on campus buildings, 90% of the funds have come from the community, not the state.* So the state has, essentially, received a 9 to 1 match from private and local public sources.

Thanks for consideration of these points. If anyone in the Governor's office has any questions or concerns about deferrered maintenance funding please contact me.

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