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P. O. Box 3677

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Phone (225) 342-4253, FAX (225) 342-9318

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Date: March 6, 2008

Contact: Kevin Hardy
(225) 342-4253

Budget Surplus Appropriation for Deferred Maintenance Critically Important to Colleges and Universities

Louisiana's public colleges and universities will benefit significantly from Governor Bobby Jindal's plan to spend the state's \$1.1 billion budget surplus, especially in the area of deferred building maintenance. Among other benefits for state higher education, the governor's proposed spending plan includes \$80 million to help public colleges and universities repair and update campus facilities long overdue for routine maintenance and, in many cases, critical repairs.

"Eighty million dollars will go a long way toward bringing many of the state's aging and neglected educational facilities up to a reasonable state of repair and serviceability," said Commissioner of Higher Education Joseph Savoie. "The public higher education community is very thankful that Governor Jindal has recognized this critical need. Of course, the most important beneficiaries will ultimately be our college students, who deserve the best educational experience our state can provide them."

The Board of Regents routinely requests an appropriation for building maintenance in its annual higher education budget proposal, but each year only limited funds are made available. The result is a continually growing backlog of "deferred maintenance." A backlog of some \$308 million in deferred maintenance has been identified as "currently critical." The total backlog of deferred maintenance stands at approximately \$1.8 billion.