Dear Students, Faculty and Staff,

As you may be hearing in the news and elsewhere, the State of Illinois has not passed an annual budget for the fiscal year that began July 1. Some limited state operations are being funded, including K-12 education, health care and corrections, but higher education is not yet included in the budget. Of particular concern is the state’s Monetary Award Program (MAP), which provides grants to Illinois students who attend community colleges or public and private colleges in Illinois.

This year, nearly 5,000 DePaul students were awarded an estimated MAP grant in their financial aid package. The Illinois Student Assistance Commission, which administers MAP, made it clear that this award is “subject to appropriation.” Currently, since MAP is not in the budget, there is no appropriation to allow the state to pay these grants.

The university is committed to ensuring a DePaul education is affordable. This fall, our trustees authorized staff to work with current students on an individual basis if MAP funds are not forthcoming for the current year.

I remain hopeful that our state leaders will resolve their differences and pass a budget, but it is less clear to me whether they will do so in time to be able to fund MAP. In the meantime, we are exploring the steps necessary to fulfill our mission of providing an excellent education to all, including those who can least afford it, especially if the state’s commitment to MAP changes.

Today I am asking for your help. PLEASE contact your state representative and the governor’s office. Urge them to fund MAP now. It’s a simple message, but one that I need your help to amplify. Please call today if possible. Our 5,000 students need every one of your voices.

- Governor Bruce Rauner’s office may be reached by calling: (312) 814-2121 or (217) 782-0244. You may also leave a comment on his website: http://www.illinois.gov/gov/contactus/Pages/default.aspx

- Using your zip code, you may find your state representative and his or her office phone number here: https://salsa4.salsalabs.com/o/50920/getLocal.jsp

The MAP program has been a key piece of Illinois’ higher education policy for decades. It is important to know that MAP enjoys strong bi-partisan support. The political fight affecting the budget is not due to MAP. However, until the impasse over unrelated issues is resolved, MAP remains unfunded and its future uncertain.

Be assured that DePaul will continue to monitor this situation until it is resolved. The state’s political leaders have heard my voice many times. Now is time they hear from more citizens who support this important financial aid program. Thank you in advance for your help, and thank you for all you do for DePaul University.

Sincerely,

Rev. Dennis H. Holtschneider, C.M.
President