

STATE-RELATED UNIVERSITIES BUDGET HEARING WRAP

Wednesday, March 11, 2026



General Overview:

President Neeli Bendapudi of Penn State University, President John Fry of Temple University, Chancellor Joan Gabel of the University of Pittsburgh, and President Brenda Allen of Lincoln University testified before the House Appropriations Committee today. House Republicans focused their questions on measures to ensure state funding appropriately supports Pennsylvania students, how universities are preparing students for high-need jobs, and how the universities are dealing with artificial intelligence (AI).

Key Takeaways:

- The Governor's budget proposes supporting Penn State with \$277.8 million, Temple University with \$158.2 million, and the University of Pittsburgh with \$155.5 million from the General Fund. These totals are all level funded. Lincoln University is proposed at just below \$23 million, an increase of \$1.1 million, or 5.0%. Altogether, this represents \$614.4 million in General Fund spending.
 - These totals do not include the State-Related University Performance Fund, an additional \$30 million for distribution to Penn State, University of Pittsburgh and Temple based on performance.
- State-related university funding requests submitted to the Governor were as follows: Penn State asked for \$394.4 million, an 11.7% increase; Temple requested \$183.5 million, a 16% increase; the University of Pittsburgh asked for \$161.2 million, a 3.7% increase; and Lincoln requested \$24.1 million, a 10% increase. In total, state-related universities requested \$763.2 million in state funding, \$148.8 million more than the Governor's proposal.
- House Republicans asked whether the Governor's flat-funding proposal would lead to tuition increases for Pennsylvania students. The University of Pittsburgh did not have a finalized rate, but said tuition would increase. Temple stated tuition would rise between 3.6% - 3.9%. Penn State has already approved an increase of 2.0% at University Park, with tuition remaining flat at Commonwealth Campuses.
- Members once again pressed all state-related universities to work closely with Community Colleges to ensure seamless credit transfer.
- The rise of AI presents opportunities and challenges. Members learned that state-related universities have implemented policies for the ethical use of AI and AI education.
- House Republicans once again expressed concerns to Penn State regarding their closure of seven branch campuses. Penn State confirmed it has not yet submitted the closures to the Pennsylvania Department of Education.

Notable Q&A:



Rep. Zach Mako asks how the Governor's flat-funding proposal will affect Pennsylvania resident tuition rates.

Rep. Eric Nelson asks for an update on the Performance Based Funding Commission and GrowPA Scholarship Program.



Rep. Charity Krupa requests an update on the planned closure of seven Penn State branch campuses and the negative impacts on communities with those campuses.