Dear ,

 We would like to ask for your support to make the Kentucky university system the best it can be to provide an education for our residents, attract good students from out of state to come and help build up Kentucky, and provide an engine for economic growth.

 We appreciate the complex task that you have in balancing the state budget, setting up a climate for job growth and providing essential government services. We ask you smooth the pace of the cuts, and offer to work with you on a long-range plan to keep our university system nationally competitive and a great asset to Kentucky.

 UofL is now a ranked research university. We have greatly improved the six year graduation rate that makes students into taxpayers and productive members of the economy. If we raise tuition or reduce services, an immediate result will likely be our graduation rate will decrease, research may suffer and the state would lose tax revenue and the greater economic participation of its citizens.

 While UofL improved many things, other states' institutions have also become better. The prizes of student and faculty talent, and federal grants to leverage them, are highly competitive on the national scale. Our university cannot reduce services and still attract good students, faculty and grants in the face of national competition.

 We hope to work with you to make our universities the best that they can be with the resources available, to have Kentucky lead the growth fostered by a strong university system. Prosperous states achieve and keep their standards of living by wisely investing in their universities. Universities, in turn, have an obligation to provide excellence in undergraduate and graduate education so their alumni will contribute to society and have jobs which pay well enough to support families. On a broader scale, they need competitive excellence in research so that they can provide ideas and expertise to develop or attract talent and new employers to our state. Our faculty, staff and students come from all parts of the state, and from all political backgrounds. We can pull together as part of the same Kentucky team to help with that goal.

 We ask to work together with you -- including looking at our current and potentially new nationally-ranked measures of performance, and independent external reviews -- to help build an excellent, competitive university system to lead Kentucky to prosperity.

Yours sincerely,