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The following statement regarding the fiscal year 2016 budget may be attributed to ABOR President Eileen I. Klein:

“Universities were dealt a big blow in the fiscal year 2016 budget with \$100 million in cuts. Cuts to university budgets represent 63 percent of all hard cuts made in the name of balancing the state budget.

“Our governor challenged our state to think big. Our board of regents and university presidents did just that throughout the budget process, acknowledging that some cuts would be necessary to help the state live within its means and offering feasible solutions to help offset some of those reductions. We recommended numerous changes that would encourage a more entrepreneurial and innovative university system and help decrease costs. To date, all of those have been rejected. Instead, cuts were increased from \$75 million in the governor’s original budget proposal to \$100 million – a discriminatory 33 percent increase - with no flexibility in how to manage them across the enterprise to assure equity and no promise of being reversed when our state revenue picture brightens. In the coming weeks we will determine what these reductions mean to our university enterprise.

“Balancing our state’s budget may be job one facing our policymakers, but it is not the only job. Despite the action taken by our legislature and the governor on the budget, we remain undeterred in our quest to foster a strong university system that provides access to all qualified students, supports our state’s economy, and provides a better quality of life for all Arizona residents.

“Much has been said about ‘special interests’ in this budget debate. Our interests are the students, families, employees and citizens who are fighting for a better life. To those who rallied against university budget cuts and fought to make their voice heard: We hear you. We thank you. We support you. You are Arizona’s true leaders.

“We thank the business community who stood with us, including Greater Phoenix Leadership, Southern Arizona Leadership Council, Flagstaff 40 and the Greater Phoenix Chamber of Commerce. We also thank the legislators who fought hard to the end for students and families.

“Together, we will persevere in building a new model of higher education that continues the legacy and positive impact of Arizona State University, Northern Arizona University and the University of Arizona and remains faithful to our state constitution.”

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The Arizona Board of Regents is committed to ensuring access for qualified residents of Arizona to undergraduate and graduate instruction; promoting the discovery, application, and dissemination of new knowledge; extending the benefits of university activities to Arizona's citizens outside the university; and maximizing the benefits derived from the state's investment in education. For more information visit AZRegents.edu.