Thank you Chairwoman Schuitmaker and Chairman McCready and the other members of the joint House and Senate Appropriation Subcommittee on Higher Education, for the opportunity to visit with you today. It is an honor to represent the University of Michigan-Flint.

Like President Schlissel I am also new to my position as Chancellor at UM-Flint. I arrived on campus in August 2014 from California where I worked for nearly 30 years. I am a native Michigander and I must say, this was a rather uncommon way to come home and I am delighted to be at the University of Michigan-Flint!

The charge of a regional comprehensive university is to partner with the region to transform it... to provide access to quality education, to add to the research capital, economic vitality and quality of life. Nearly 90% of our students are from Michigan and 57% from Genesee County. UM-Flint extends the Michigan reach to a community that has been deeply underserved. The opportunity to be at a university that is so wholly engaged with the people of Flint and Genesee county was an opportunity too good to pass up.
University of Michigan-Flint Overview

The people of Flint pushed to get a campus in Flint nearly 60 years ago and today the local community continues to be both proud of and hold high expectations for the University. Our enrollment is at a historical high with just over 8,500 students: 8,574.

As enrollment grows, we have become increasingly diverse with 28.85% African American students in our incoming freshman class. International student enrollment has increased dramatically with UM-Flint students now hailing from over 40 different countries around the globe. Diversity is crucial to all that we do. It enriches our community and adds an intangible value to the quality of our academic programs. A majority of our international students live in downtown Flint and are helping to shape the City of Flint as a college town.

It is not enough, however, to bring students to this campus and celebrate enrollment growth. They must thrive and they must complete their education. Helping to support students as they earn their degrees is our highest priority.

We have launched several initiatives aimed at increasing student academic support. Additionally we are working to redirect student financial aid in a way that will help more students finish their degrees. An aspect of our Victors for Michigan Capital Campaign is student scholarships. We are committed to raising financial support and reducing debt for our students.

While the University has numerous successful programs I want to highlight a unique and important student support program at UM-Flint. As you may know, Genesee County has one of the largest populations of foster youth in the state. The University of Michigan-Flint received a three-year grant from the Michigan Department of Human Services (DHS) for the implementation of the FOSTERing Success Initiative in 2012. This grant is administered in partnership with Ennis Center for Children, Inc., located just blocks from campus in downtown Flint.

“Mpowering My Success” serves up to 25 students each year, and provides participants with the comprehensive wrap-around support services necessary to successfully transition to college and persist to degree completion. MPowering My Success supports, mentors, and funds students who have aged out of foster care. We thank the State of Michigan Department of Human Services for providing these grants so institutions of higher education can provide the critical support needed for this vulnerable population. I am proud to announce that yesterday, the Michigan Department of Human Services has extended our grant for another year!

I would like to thank the Michigan State Legislature for passing Public Act 530 of 2014 (House Bill 5444) that created the Fostering Futures Scholarship, which will significantly reduce the financial burdens faced by foster youth enrolled in college. Last week a dozen of our foster students had dinner at my house. It was
such a great group of students, but I was struck as the conversation turned to one of their birthdays. The student was turning 21 and instead of the traditional right of passage conversation, it turned to one of how they dreaded their 21st birthdays as they aged out of their support. One of our Mpowering students shared, “As foster youth, we are not given a chance to know what normal is.” At UM-Flint, we believe our efforts are changing that, one Mpowering student at a time!

Our partnerships are critical to our success and the success of our community. Over 320 high school students participate in our “Dual Enrollment Education Partnership.” They will finish with up to 13 university credits, depending on their program of study. The DEEP programs in Genesee, Lapeer, Macomb and Livingston counties are preparing a new generation of students for the rigors of higher education.

Our newest DEEP partnership with the Flint Community Schools will enroll 24 senior high school students who will earn 12 university credit hours this upcoming academic year. We are working deeply with the Flint Community Schools in multiple ways to increase the number of students who pursue a quality and rigorous post-secondary experience.

In partnership with the Genesee Intermediate School District we host the Genesee Early College on our campus. These students outperform traditional high school students in Genesee County and finish with a high school diploma and an average of 45 college credits and with an average GPA of 3.3.

This fall we will launch our second Early College in partnership with Grand Blanc Community Schools. Cohorts of up to 50 students will be enrolling in this innovative three-year Early College.

Our partnerships extend well beyond the realm of education in our community. We work collaboratively with institutions in our community to solve problems ranging from truancy to transportation. UM-Flint is making a positive contribution to the rebirth of the City of Flint and Genesee County as we transition to a knowledge-based economy. The university’s economic impact on the City of Flint and Genesee County is substantial. Our total economic impact on the region in fiscal year 2014 was over $113 million. This includes nearly $30 million released to students in terms of financial assistance and nearly $23 million in university purchases from the community.

UM-Flint has been nationally recognized in a number of ways. Just in the last few months we received several recognitions:

- The University of Michigan-Flint was named to the President’s Higher Education Community Service Honor Roll for the first time in December 2014.
• The Princeton Review recognized the School of Management as one of the “Best Business Schools” for 2015 and selected to its “Best in the Midwest” list for the 14th year in a row.

• We have been recognized as one of the Best Colleges for Veterans in the Midwest Regional Universities.

• The Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching recognizes the University of Michigan-Flint as a “Community Engaged Institution.”

**University of Michigan-Flint’s Ongoing Cost Saving Measures**

As I have shared with the State Budget Office last fall, let me outline just a few of the ongoing cost-saving measures that have been implemented at the University of Michigan-Flint.

The reductions in state financial support occurred while enrollment at the university has increased 38%. Accordingly, tuition-generated revenue has become a significant part of the university budget.

In response to reductions in the level of state support, the University of Michigan-Flint has implemented effective cost control strategies. An example of a strategy that has been very beneficial is our participation in the State of Michigan Higher Education Purchasing Consortium. This is an ongoing effort to leverage purchasing power and reduce our utility expense in the current fiscal year and beyond. We also make strategic purchases of natural gas when market conditions are favorable.

**Governor Snyder’s FY 2015-16 Higher Education Budget Proposal**

I would like to thank Governor Snyder for increasing funding to the State’s public universities budget this year with a 2% overall increase. The Governor’s budget proposal continues to recognize the need to make strategic investments in higher education.

Access to education is part of our university’s mission. We share the Governor’s and legislature’s commitment to keeping tuition affordable for our students and their families.

I am pleased to see that the Governor has agreed to change one of the metrics based on overall number of Pell Grant students to a percentage of Pell Grant students as a key measurement. This is a metric that our campus sought out when the initial set of metrics were being developed three years ago. As we have looked at the data on the number of Pell eligible students versus the percentage of Pell eligible students enrolled at our universities, I believe and encourage the committee to adopt this metric to be the percentage of Pell eligible students enrolled which is a more
accurate representation of our campus’s effort to make higher education open to all students, especially those that meet need-based aid requirements.

Thank you for the time and opportunity to provide testimony to the joint committee this year. Thank you as well for the work you do on behalf of the people of Michigan. I would like to invite you to Flint to visit campus. I am willing to answer any questions that the Chairs, or members of the committee, may have.