Media Relations

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UNH President Testifies on Capitol Hill in Support of Charitable Tax Deductions

Mark Huddleston, president of the University of New Hampshire, testifies before the U.S. House of Representatives Committee on Ways and Means on the importance of charitable giving to higher education.

WASHINGTON, D.C. – University of New Hampshire President Mark W. Huddleston testified before the U.S. House of Representatives Committee on Ways and Means earlier today at a hearing on tax reform and charitable contributions where he stressed to lawmakers the importance of charitable giving to higher education.

"At UNH, more than two-thirds of the donors who have created endowments have done so to support financial aid and scholarships. Ten percent of the funds we raise in any given year underwrite research and teaching initiatives. While they are fewer in number, some of our donors do recognize that better facilities can be essential to better teaching—a fortunate perception given the challenges associated with state bonding and the resulting backlog in major maintenance. In short, our partnership with private donors has delivered enormous economic benefits to our society, but unfortunately, it is a partnership undergoing severe stress," Huddleston said in his testimony. His complete testimony can be downloaded here.

The Committee on Ways and Means is examining the itemized deduction for charitable contributions as part of its work on comprehensive tax reform. A complete list of those who testified at the hearing is available here.

"It was an honor to represent the university on this very important topic before the Committee on Ways and Means," Huddleston said. "With state support for public higher education at a 20-year low and UNH's unfortunate distinction of being last in the nation in per capita support, private philanthropy is absolutely critical to the future of public higher education. Donors give to causes they believe in not just for a tax break, but it would be a mistake to create disincentives for people to give back to institutions like UNH. Affordability and access to higher education remain our number one priority and charitable tax deductions are an important piece of that equation."

In addition to representing UNH, Huddleston testified on behalf of a number of higher education associations including the American Council on Education, American Association of Collegiate Registrars and Admissions Officers, American Association of Community Colleges, American Association of State Colleges and Universities, American Indian Higher Education Consortium,

Association of American Universities, Association of Community College Trustees, Association of Jesuit Colleges and Universities, Association of Public and Land-grant Universities, National Association of Independent Colleges and Universities, and the National Association of Student Financial Aid Administrators. Together, these associations represent approximately 4,300 two- and four-year public and private colleges and universities.

The University of New Hampshire, founded in 1866, is a world-class public research university with the feel of a New England liberal arts college. A land, sea, and space-grant university, UNH is the state's flagship public institution, enrolling 12,200 undergraduate and 2,300 graduate students.

PHOTO
http://waysandmeans.house.gov/calendar/eventsingle.aspx?EventID=319000
Mark Huddleston, president of the University of New Hampshire, testifies before the U.S. House of Representatives Committee on Ways and Means on the importance of charitable giving to higher education. Courtesy photo, Jay Mallin Photos.

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