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# ILLINOIS COMMISSION ON EQUITABLE PUBLIC UNIVERSITY FUNDING

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## Illinois Commission on Equitable Public University Funding

September 1, 2022: 12:00pm-3:00pm CT

Meeting #5 Notes

### **Welcome & Agenda Overview**

Chief of Staff Ja'Neane Minor provided background information regarding the meeting logistics and fulfilling the requirements of the Open Meetings Act. Chief of Staff Minor also walked through an overview of the agenda for the meeting with highlights of the topics to be covered. Katie Lynne Morton confirmed there was a quorum in attendance.

### **Action: Approval of minutes from May 2022 Commission meeting**

Katie Lynne Morton called the roll to approve the minutes from the May 25, 2022 meeting.

- Commissioner Glassman motioned to approve the minutes. Co-Chair Deputy Governor Torres seconded.
- The roll was called and twenty-two commissioners approved.

### **Commission Reflection: Charge, Objectives, Meeting Arc**

Ms. Martha Snyder walked through a number of slides to help reground the Commission members in the work of the Commission, where it came from and why it is so vital. Ms. Snyder reminded members of A Thriving Illinois, the IBHE Strategic Plan, which was developed through stakeholder survey responses, community engagement and virtual focus groups across the states. A thriving Illinois has an inclusive economy and broad prosperity with equitable paths to opportunity for all, especially those facing the greatest barriers. The three strategies for a Thriving Illinois are:

- Close the equity gaps for students who have been left behind,
- Build a strong financial future for individuals and institutions, and
- Increase talent and innovation to drive economic growth.

When A Thriving Illinois was developed, a set of principles were outlined for a public higher education funding system that is equitable, stable and adequate. Those principles include:

- Provide equitable funding so that students can receive the best educational experience and succeed;
- Support a thriving postsecondary system that enriches the state and its residents;
- Fund institutions sufficiently to achieve student, institutional, and state goals;
- Ensure affordability for all students;
- Recognize institutional uniqueness;
- Provide predictability, stability, and limited volatility;
- Include a "hold-harmless" provisions;
- Support accountability;
- Support a collaborative higher education system; and
- Encourage partnerships outside higher education.

Ms. Snyder shared the Legislative Charge with the Commission members. The goals and objectives of the Commission are anchored in establishing:

- a shared understanding of current funding structure in IL;
- learning from other states to understand various approaches to issues of post-secondary finance;
- and ultimately developing recommendations centered on increasing access and success for historically underrepresented students—Black, Latinx, low-income, rural, and working adults, among others who have been underrepresented and underserved;

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- Approaches to state investments that address historical inequities and reflect adequate funding policies; and
- and supporting the varied missions of our universities.

Ms. Snyder shared a reminder of the workplan for the Commission, which includes three phases. Phase one, where we established common understanding and context, has been completed. We are now in Phase two, where we build out the analysis and discuss models. Then we will turn to Phase 3, where we will finalize analysis and modeling and hone in on a set of recommendations. There will be obvious overlap and transition between phases to facilitate us towards conclusion.

To support the next phases of the work, the Commission established three workgroups. It was shared that two of the workgroups have been meeting and would provide update reports during the meeting.

### ***Student Panel***

Co-Chair Leader Kimberly Lightford introduced each of the students that joined the Commission meeting, as follows:

Romeo Bell is a Rehabilitation and Disability major, Counseling minor, and a Family and Child studies minor. Bell is currently an Undergraduate Representative for my organization Rehabilitation Counseling Student Association and a Community Advisor at NIU. Bell plans on pursuing a master degree in Rehabilitation Counseling to one day become a Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor. Their mother is a big influence on why he chose this career path, saying "I wouldn't be the man I am today without her." Unfortunately, she suffers from a disability called Cerebral Palsy. The way she has provided and cared for Bell and others while facing her own challenges is the reason why Romeo is passionate in doing the same for people in need. Bell's goal is to gain more Cultural Awareness/Competence to be a vital part in bringing awareness to social policies our society needs. Another goal is to also help people understand disability, under the greater umbrella of diversity, while bringing greater comfort when talking about and considering disability as it pertains to these tough conversations.

Levina Cherry is an ambitious senior at Chicago State University, a Predominantly Black Institution studying Communications, Media Arts & Theatre. A delighted mother with 2 children who transferred to Chicago State University in 2017 after making the necessary decision to return to school to finally receive her bachelor's degree. Upon graduation, Cherry plans on being a news anchor woman.

Dorcas Brou is the current Student Trustee of Southern Illinois Carbondale and serves on the SIU Board of Trustees. She is majoring in cinema and plans to pursue an MFA in film and video production, and become a director and create narrative films. A McNair Scholar, Brou has held several varied leadership roles on campus and undergraduate student government (USG). This includes serving as a USG senator representing the School of Media Arts, academic chair for the Black Affairs Council, the Emerging Salukis leadership development program, Women's Business Association registered student organization and being a mentee in the Women's Leadership Program.

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Mr. Mohammed A. Haq, of Elk Grove Village, Illinois, is a junior majoring in Biological Sciences and minoring in Political Science. He has served in several capacities in the Undergraduate Student Government, including most recently serving as the organization's treasurer. He has also served as an *ex officio* member of the UIC Senate and is a member of the Pre-Dental Club, the Muslim Student Association, Competitive Gaming Club, and the Economics Club.

Mr. Haq is honored to serve on the Board of Trustees to advocate for improvements in campus safety, financial affordability, mental health awareness, and the matriculation process for the next generation of UIC students.

Ash Ebikhumi is a Junior Honors Political Science and Economics major at Illinois State University. On campus, he is an Honors Peer Mentor, Director of the Alternative Breaks Program, and a Student Worker. He is an avid reader, enjoys playing the piano in his free time, and is a first-generation college student.

Co-Chair Leader Kimberly Lightford facilitated the student panel through a series of questions and answers.

*Why was it important for you to go to college?*

Mr. Bell shared that it was important for him to go to college to pave the way for his family, friends and community. He wanted to set an example, but it will also be a financial provider when it comes down to it and he is eager to gain experience from and make the connections that he has.

Mr. Ebikhumi shared that it was important to go to college because his mother immigrated from Nigeria and he saw her struggle since her degree would not transfer over from Nigeria. His mother has talked about the importance of education and how it opens up doors for the future. So, when he turned 18, his mother told him that he needed to go to college because there are so many opportunities waiting.

Ms. Cherry shared that returning to college was very important for her. She worked in an institution and became stagnant, then the institution closed and she was laid off. She had qualifications, but not the education so returning to college was essential to be able to provide for her two children. Receiving a degree in communications has always been a dream.

Ms. Brou shared that it was important to go to college. Her father immigrated from West Africa (Ivory Coast) to get a better education, which has always been a part of their family traditions and values. She was taught that to go far in life, an education is important.

Mr. Haq shared that it was important because as a person who came from an immigrant background, it was a way to grow personally and professionally and provided the ability to give back to his family and community in many different ways, including through financial mobility.

*Why did you choose the institution you enrolled in?*

Mr. Bell shared that NIU was a "hot topic" when he was a Junior in a Chicago public high school. NIU was the main school that many were talking about attending, but also it was affordable with the financial aid he received, which played a large part. NIU was also close to home as well. During freshman year, Mr. Bell realized how empowered the students were.

Ms. Cherry shared that she chose Chicago State University due to the parking, distance from home and affordability. The biggest thing was that her older son also graduated from Chicago State University. She decided to go back to where he completed and complete her own education.

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Ms. Brou shared that affordability was a large factor in her decision since she is a twin. She chose Southern Illinois University Carbondale because it was very affordable and it had her major.

Mr. Haq shared that he decided to attend UIC including the cost of attendance, financial aid, resources available, community environment and the proximity to his family. He has been very happy at UIC, the community is very welcoming and inclusive.

Mr. Ebikhumi made his college decision in the midst of COVID - comfortability and opportunity were major factors. When visiting the campus, he met staff and faculty members that cared about the student experience and want their students to succeed. The campus also had so many different opportunities for students. He wanted a place where he can grow and where people are supported.

*What role did affordability play in your decision making? (Romeo, Ash)*

Mr. Bell shared that affordability played a tremendous role. Coming from low-income housing, he was lucky to receive federal funding.

Mr. Ebikhumi shared that affordability played a significant role. His brother was paying a large sum for tuition and housing and as a result, was looking for a state institution that wouldn't have a large financial burden for his family. He has received a number of scholarships to help financially.

*What role does it play in your continued enrollment?*

Mr. Bell said that affordability plays a tremendous role in keeping him enrolled. He would have never thought about graduate school, without the knowledge that his federal aid would continue for a total of six years.

Ms. Cherry shared that receiving the funding plays a large role. Without the education, the jobs available to her did not have a livable wage. Financial aid and scholarships have been a good support.

*What does the Commission need to think about to equitably serve all students?*

Ms. Brou shared that students are thankful for the resources. It's important to note the growing inflation and cost of living, which is unlikely to decrease.

*Other than financial support, what other support services have been provided to you specifically that have kept you enrolled in school?*

Ms. Cherry shared that additional resources include scholarships, learning center (where tutors are available), Dean's awards for academic, Provost Award for academic. Tutoring has helped to keep her on task and earn these awards. Infrastructure and technology is important to keep updated so that students can stay up to date in this fast-moving world.

*What are some support services that were not available that would have been helpful or beneficial?*

Ms. Brou offered that there are many resources at Southern, including cultural resources. There could always be more funding for these programs. The creation of more opportunities for students is always welcome.

*Did your background play a role in your decision making?*

Mr. Haq shared that his background absolutely played a role in his decision. He came to the United States from India and became a US citizen in 2020. His family values played a huge role in his decision.

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Mr. Ebikhumi shared that his background played a role since his mother always had him and his siblings interact with leaders who looked like them. Diversity on a campus is important and played a role in his decision.

*How does campus culture impact your decision to stay at your institution?*

Mr. Haq shared that the campus culture at UIC is so diverse with every background imaginable. The administration is placing a heavy emphasis on the diversity in the faculty and student-faculty ratio.

*Is there anything else you would like to share with the commission regarding affordability and resources needed for students to enroll and complete their credentials in Illinois?*

Mr. Bell shared that in his own personal life he has had many resources to help him along the path. He thanked the Commission for looking into this matter and for the opportunity to share.

Ms. Cherry shared that from a parent point of view, and a student perspective, that the affordability (funding) is still available and that institutions have the necessary support systems in place for students. There needs to be professors that are compassionate about teaching and that care about their student's success.

Ms. Brou shared that apart from looking at tuition and fees, it is important to look into the cost of living. To live on campus, students need to be able to afford housing and food. A lot of graduate students on campus do not receive stipends that cover the full cost of necessities (food, housing). Student voice needs to continue to be considered.

Mr. Haq shared that he would like to request the commission to consider not only strengthening the structure in place, but also to look into helping students who come back backgrounds that don't qualify for financial aid. In too many cases, there have been exceptions like these that cause students to take nontraditional pathways. No matter the decisions, we all would like family, security, dignity and opportunity.

Mr. Ebikhumi agreed with his fellow panelists. He reiterated that importance of the indirect student costs - internships, living/housing, student teaching travel costs, and other costs that students face aside from tuition and housing.

Commissioners were given the opportunity to ask questions to the student panelists. Commissioner Weffer asked what process the students took to determine the affordability that was appropriate for them. What were some of the factors that were taken into consideration?

Ms. Brou shared that it's daunting to see the thousands of dollars that it would cost. She did research to find out general prices to find a school that was under \$30,000 for the first year. An online calculator was helpful to narrow down this pricetag.

Mr. Haq shared similar information. He was the first in his family to attend college in the United States. His high school counselors had mentoring opportunities that were able to help explain the costs and provide information for the options.

Mr. Bell shared that he had a counselor in high school who broke down financial aid so it was understandable. Mr. Bell became a community advisor which has really helped with his people skills, provide additional funding and offer a great opportunity for him.

Commissioner Huang provided thanks to all the students for their information and time.

### ***Adequacy & Resource Workgroup Overview***

Ms. Snyder shared an overview of the Adequacy and Resource workgroups. Each workgroup has held four meetings since the last Commission meeting.

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Adequacy Workgroup: The adequacy workgroup will focus on evaluating and understanding various issues and concepts of adequacy in postsecondary finance. The workgroup will support the Commission's work in identifying the components that comprise an adequate and equitable finance structure for universities in context of the legislative charge and definitional concepts developed by the Commission.

The outcome of this review will be to analyze the components of adequacy and institutional "adequacy profiles" that help inform the cost of achieving adequacy for each institution.

Resources Workgroup: The resource workgroup will help define the different types of resources to be considered as a way to assess adequacy and inform how to equitably invest new state resources toward achieving adequacy for institutions.

The outcome of this workgroup will be resource mapping across each institution that can be used (in conjunction with the adequacy workgroup) a "gap analysis" between institutional adequacy and resources.

Each of the two above workgroup's work and recommendations will feed into the Technical Modeling Workgroup.

Technical Modeling Workgroup: The technical workgroup will build upon the conceptual framework established by the Commission (informed by the adequacy and resource workgroup) and begin identifying metrics/data, modeling distribution mechanisms and various funding scenarios/implementation options based on spending considerations.

The workgroup's analysis will incorporate the components of adequacy and varying levels of resources (revenue streams) across institutions, as outlined by the Commission.

### *Adequacy & Resource: How the workgroups Interrelate*

Each institution will have an Adequacy Target, built from the components of what it costs for students to succeed and will vary based on student need. The Adequacy Workgroup is developing these components. Each institution has Resources available to it. The Resources Workgroup is determining which types of resources should be counted to determine how close an institution is to adequacy.

### **Adequacy Workgroup Report**

Commissioners Stean and Freeman gave a report of the work that has been ongoing in the Adequacy Workgroup.

#### *Summary of Discussion*

- Reviewed Research on Postsecondary Funding/Implications for Adequate Postsecondary Funding
- Developed Framework Components of Adequacy
- Analytical Considerations for Instructional, Academic and Student Support Components

#### *Summary of Research for Equitable & Adequate Postsecondary Funding*

- Clear connection between state funding and student outcomes
- Adequacy in postsecondary context often disconnected from equity
- Existing postsecondary funding models are not based on what it costs to produce an



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outcome

- Research shows costs to achieve an outcome vary for different groups of students
- Funding matters, but what is invested in matters too
- Costs of different pathways vary, this includes costs across programs and disciplines

## *Instruction and Student Services*

- Workgroup engaged in detailed discussion of each element of instruction and student supports.
- Focused on identifying the evidence-based practices that support student access, retention and success.
- Discussed the need to embed equity within the model and reflect the increased level of resources needed to support different students.

Commissioner Steans walked through each of the components of instruction and student supports to show how the workgroup has begun to approach the understanding of these components, the rationale, the aligned evidence-based practices (when appropriate) and the potential measures for calculating costs.

Considerations for the Technical Modeling Workgroup include determining the right level of analysis for costs associated with evidence-based practices; recognizing the "Status quo" of available cost data vs. funding additional capacity to serve more students and achieve greater equity in access, retention and success; and accounting for historical inequities in certain cost data (program/discipline).

Commissioner Freeman shared the following questions for the Commission:

- Does the overarching framework for adequacy capture the key considerations for calculating postsecondary adequacy?
- For instruction and student services components – does the approach to ground the analysis in evidence-based practices that foster access, retention and completion resonate?
- What additional considerations should the workgroup factor in as we continue our work?

Commissioner Kinzy shared that colleagues in Michigan calculated a minimum per student number that was essential for every student to achieve an education, called Strive for 45. This was done between 15-20 years ago and they just hit it this year. Has any research shown a minimum level of funding? Ms. Snyder shared that the number is grounded in what it takes to operate, but may not be so much grounded in support.

Commissioner Scott shared that she appreciated that the workgroup is thinking about how to differentiate students based on where they're from (high schools, zip codes). The Equity Working Group that Chicago State University convened shared that there are resources that students need such as tutoring.

Commissioner Stuart appreciated the student-focused look that the workgroup has taken. What's best for students is not a blanket answer. Many of the categories shared intersect. Higher Education goes further beyond into the community, offering a cultural center sometimes (ballets, museum, etc.). We want to make sure to respect these costs that go beyond just the student-touch.

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Commissioner Zarnikow shared that transparency is a necessity, that the model is not a “black box” so that support is continued and the model is understood with a way to explain the outputs. Commissioner Martire shared examples and elements from the K-12 EBF. There was agreement in the transparency of the model with well-identified inputs. Commissioner Steans shared that readily available data points are important, after understanding what we want to look at and what can be worked into the analysis.

The Adequacy Workgroup’s next steps include:

- Incorporate Commission feedback into Student-Centered Component considerations.
- Review other components of adequacy:
  - Mission (research and services), and
  - Operations + Maintenance.*[Report to Commission in December]*
- Finalize recommendations and considerations for technical workgroup to begin modeling.

## **Break**

The Commissioners took a ten minute break.

## **Resource Workgroup Report**

Commissioners Castillo-Richmond and Scott gave a report of the work that has been ongoing in the Resource Workgroup.

### *Summary of Discussion*

- Review and Framework of Institutional Revenue Categories/Definitions
- IL-based Analysis and Discussions
- University Income Fund (tuition)
  - Grants + Contracts (Government + Private)
  - Endowment
  - Auxiliaries
- Initial Recommendations/Considerations For Equity and Adequacy

### *Framing Questions for Workgroup Discussions*

- What are the different resources institutions have access to?
- What are the uses or limitations of these resources?
- What are the implications for equity relation to these resources?
- What are considerations for including these resources in assessing an institution's level of adequate resources?

### *Summative Reflections*

- Resources must be evaluated through lens of equity and how they influence an institution’s ability and capacity to equitably serve students



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- Not always about what the definition and direct use of resources but a more critical understanding: does having access to the resources provide differential capacity to institutions? Does this have implications for equity?
- Leads to more critical analysis and recognition that to include or not include a resource is not “yes” or “no” but more nuanced. Particularly for “non-appropriated funds”
- Ultimately the work needs to factor in state commitment: both the first (current investment) and last (future investment) resource “in”

Information from the Income Fund discussion, as well as Government Grants and Contracts, Private Grants and Contracts and Endowments was also shared with the Commission members.

### *Questions for Commission*

- Do the workgroup's discussions and initial considerations resonate with the Commission?
- How should the workgroup approach the continued evaluation and consideration of resources such as grants, endowments and auxiliaries?
- What additional considerations should the workgroup factor in as we continue our work?

Commissioner Weffer asked about differential tuition and whether it was included. If not, he recommended including differential tuition. How will data be used? Nate Johnson shared that this does seem important to weigh in on. There are different ways to address: adjust for proportions of out of state students or calculate an adequate number. There are many philosophies in how out of state students are supported. Is Illinois a state that will encourage, through appropriations, the welcoming of out of state students?

Commissioner Freeman flagged that it's important how we portray institutional aid that comes from institutional resources. Many folks assume that funding to support students only come from Pell, MAP or philanthropic sources. There is money that looks to be going into university operations that is actually filtering back to support students.

Commissioner Green commented around recruiting out of state students and the fact that many students are migrating out of the state. At GSU, 85 percent of the students who graduate remain in the area following graduation.

Deputy Governor Torres shared a perspective that all public universities should be a “destination” site for students. We want to attract talent as possible.

Commissioner Mahoney shared that money from the state has flexibility, but money from other sources doesn't always have flexibility.

Commissioner Huang commended the two workgroups on their work. Moving forward to the Technical Modeling workgroup, will there be representation from the campuses who do not have representation on the Adequacy and Resources workgroup. Ms. Snyder shared that institutions sitting on the Commission primarily have representatives on the workgroups, or their designees.

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Commissioner Steans raised a question around Endowments: how do we incorporate in a calibrated way (not all or nothing). Commissioner Scott shared that it should be considered since it's a form of income. The workgroup still needs to wrestle further with this and on other information, such as waivers. Another question on the table is how resources get calculated, such as auxiliaries.

Commissioner Weffer clarified that he was suggesting that specific institutions could make conscious decisions to go after out of state and international students because their differential tuition provides more incoming tuition into the institution. If deciding to recruit more heavily nationally and internationally, there are equity considerations for in-state students. Commissioner Castillo-Richmond shared that often times the largest competitor is "nowhere" - students are not attending Illinois institutions, but also are just not enrolling in college.

Commissioner Reyes commented on auxiliaries funds. Usually there is a cost transfer, and not additional revenue because there is a cost to housing students, providing dining, upkeep to parking lots. The revenue and cost needs to be looked at. How do we bring into the equation the maintenance of grounds, police, custodians?

Commissioner Martire shared information regarding the equation, and that excluding a revenue source creates inequity. Most of the endowment money takes the pressure off of other revenue sources. The ratio (numerator/denominator) is applying to new revenue from the state going forward because of the hold harmless. How should new revenue be shared?

Commissioner Zarnikow asked about out of state students: percent of in-state versus out of state. Do we have data on this? A number of institutions have eliminated differential tuition in an effort to attract as many students as possible.

## *Next Steps*

- Continue to Refine Understanding of (non-state appropriated) Resources and Considerations for Equity and Adequacy
- Recommendations in context of state appropriated funds
  - Overall state goal (% of revenue from state)
  - Variation across institutions considering student and revenue
- Finalize recommendations and considerations for the technical workgroup

## **Public Comment**

Dr. Barnes-Teamer reminded members of the public that they have up to three minutes to provide public comment.

- Jennifer Delaney, Associate Professor of Higher Education at the University of Illinois Urbana Champagne and member of the Illinois Board of Higher Education. Ms. Delaney shared what she heard missing from the adequacy discussion. It's important to ground the metrics in evidence. Ms. Delaney didn't hear a discussion at the conceptual level, leaving four questions. Why is adequacy an important conceptual frame to apply to higher education? Other states haven't used this metric and it's important to articulate this moving forward. How does the notion of adequacy align with the mission of institutions? Why is adequacy needed as a frame, as opposed to

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other measures that are more simple? How does the notion of adequacy reflect the unique synergy between research and learning and universities? Students are core and vital at universities, but there are no universities in the state that are solely focused on students. Missions are much more complex. Ms. Delaney asked the workgroups to think about this follow through. Ms. Delaney elaborated on the notion of synergy that happens within universities in that both research and teaching and learning functions are in the same place at universities. She encouraged the Commission to capture what's happening in terms of teaching and learning or other student related experiences within a university.

### ***Next Steps, Closing Announcements and Adjournment***

Co-Chair Deputy Governor Torres thanked the Commission members and workgroups for their thoughtfulness and contributions to the conversation. Ms. Snyder shared next steps for both the Adequacy and Resources Workgroups. The next meeting is scheduled for December 12, 2022. At this next meeting, the Commission will hear another report out from both workgroups.

### *Commission Members in attendance*

Senate Majority Leader Kimberly Lightford, Co-Chair  
Deputy Governor for Education Martin Torres, Co-Chair  
Representative Katie Stuart  
Representative Mike Marron  
Sheila Caldwell  
Dr. Bill Bernhard  
Lisa Castillo-Richmond  
Dr. Wendi Wills El-Amin  
Cherita Ellens  
Lisa Freeman  
Gloria Gibson  
David Glassman  
Cheryl Green  
Guiyou Huang  
Terri Kinzy  
Dan Mahony  
Ralph Martire  
Dennis Papini  
Javier Reyes  
Zaldwaynaka "Z" Scott  
Robin Steans  
Respicio Vazquez  
Simón Weffer  
Jack Wuest  
Eric Zarnikow

### *Commission Members not in attendance*

Representative Carol Ammons, Co-Chair  
John Atkinson, Co-Chair

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Senator Scott Bennett  
Senator Terri Bryant  
Deputy Republic Leader Dan Brady  
Senator Dale Fowler  
Brandon Kyle

*Support Team Members in attendance*

Ja'Neane Minor  
Jaimee Ray  
Jerry Lazzara  
Emily Chase  
David Antonacci  
Toya Barnes-Teamer  
Martha Snyder  
Will Carroll  
Nate Johnson  
Jimmy Clarke  
Katie Lynne Morton