



The Ohio Urban University Program

The State's Economic Development Resource

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A life preserver for the Ohio Urban University Program -- editorial

Almost a month after we put out a SOS for the Ohio Urban University Program, it is still awaiting rescue from the Ohio General Assembly. And the wait is killing it.

Gov. Ted Strickland and Chancellor Eric Fingerhut want the program to walk the plank to save \$5 million in his biennial budget. But the state has about 5 million reasons to save the program, especially since it's a mere 0.02 percent of the state's \$54.4 billion two year budget.

The program, which consists of a consortium of public universities including Cleveland State University, crunches numbers and conducts analysis for state and local governments. All they have to do is call.

And they have been. That's why CSU's Maxine Goodman Levin College of Urban Affairs has become well known for its trove of statistics on foreclosures and employment, and its depth of knowledge of Northeast Ohio.

Levin's interim dean, Ned Hill, says the program could survive on just \$2 million if it had to, but not even that amount is on the table at the Statehouse budget hearings.

Now layoffs threaten this critical, user-friendly program. Just this week, CSU sent layoff notices to more than a half a dozen people based at the Levin College, most of them working in the crucial data department.

Keary McCarthy, the spokesman for Ohio House Speaker Armond Budish, said the Democrat from Beachwood is well aware of the program and is looking for an opportunity to save it.

"We're not there yet," said McCarthy.

Please hurry before one of CSU's best state-supported programs sinks to the bottom.



The Ohio UUP is a program of the University System of Ohio and the Ohio General Assembly.

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