

19TH DISTRICT
STATE SENATOR
CAROLYN T. COMITTA
457 MAIN CAPITOL BUILDING
SENATE BOX 203019
THE STATE CAPITOL
HARRISBURG, PA 17120-3019
717-787-5709
FAX: 717-787-4384

17 EAST GAY STREET • SUITE 301
WEST CHESTER, PA 19380
610-692-2112
FAX: 610-436-1721



Senate of Pennsylvania

COMMITTEES
**ENVIRONMENTAL RESOURCES
& ENERGY, MINORITY CHAIR**
AGING & YOUTH
AGRICULTURE & RURAL AFFAIRS
EDUCATION
LOCAL GOVERNMENT

EMAIL: SenatorComitta@pasenate.com
WEBSITE: www.pasenate.com
TWITTER: @SenatorComitta
FACEBOOK: @SenatorComitta
INSTAGRAM: @SenatorComitta

October 13, 2023

Dear Senator Ward,

I am writing on behalf of Lincoln University in my Senate District, the first degree-granting Historically Black College and University (HBCU) in the nation and one that continues to serve more than 1,800 graduate and undergraduate students each year.

Like its state-related counterparts, Pennsylvania State University, Temple University, and the University of Pittsburgh, Lincoln continues to await its annual state-related budget appropriation. These funds, which have been held up since the summer, represent approximately 20 percent of Lincoln's operating budget.

As students are now nearly midway through the fall semester, the continued delay in delivering this vital funding threatens to negatively impact nearly every aspect of life on Lincoln's campus. Students and families who are already shouldering increased consumer costs face an uncertain future in managing tuition and other necessary expenses. More than 100 faculty and staff now face a hiring freeze with furloughs on the horizon later this month.

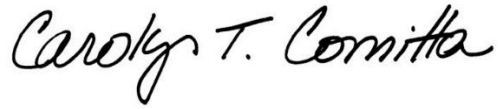
With limited cash on hand, Lincoln University leaders are searching for ways to meet their responsibility to educate and empower students. However, the ongoing fiscal stalemate is now jeopardizing student life, learning, and Lincoln's vision to be a national model for both 21st-century liberal arts undergraduate education and innovative graduate and professional programs.

In light of these growing challenges and concerns, I respectfully encourage Senate Majority Leadership to call House Bill 1461 for a vote immediately or offer some other funding mechanism or avenue to provide this necessary support. While I understand that this year's budget negotiation process, like most, had its share of partisan disputes, we must move forward in the spirit of bipartisanship for students and families across the Commonwealth. I stand ready to assist in any way possible.

Lastly, I must note that unlike the other state-related colleges and universities, Lincoln faces its own unique challenges as a smaller, semi-private, liberal arts and historically Black institution. As a result, the negative impact of holding up this appropriation is especially felt by its students, faculty, and campus.

Thank you for your consideration of this urgent request and please do not hesitate to reach out with any questions.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Carolyn T. Comitta". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, prominent 'C' at the beginning.

Carolyn T. Comitta

State Senator – 19th District

CC: Senator Joe Pittman
Senator Jay Costa
Senator Vince Hughes
Brenda A. Allen, Ph.D, President of Lincoln University