Dear Colleagues:

On February 15th, Governor Hickenlooper submitted his budget request for fiscal year 2011-12 (FY2012) to the state legislature. This request addresses an additional projected deficit of $570 million from the budget submitted last November by then Governor Ritter. In total the state general fund revenue shortfall for FY2012 will be approximately $1.2 billion.

Governor Hickenlooper’s FY2012 budget reduces funding to higher education by an additional $36 million, which would bring the total reduction from the FY2011 budget to $125 million. For Colorado School of Mines, if these actions stand through the legislative cycle, it could translate to a $5.2 million reduction in state and federal support from FY 2011 to FY 2012. Since the 2009 fiscal year, state funding to Mines will have decreased 44%, from $23.3 million to the forecasted $16.2 million in 2012.

Also included in the Governor’s budget is an additional increase of 2% in the employee contribution to PERA. This increase would be on top of the 2.5% increase that Governor Ritter submitted as part of his budget. We recognize the tremendous hardship that the increases in employee contributions will cause. These actions certainly are not reflective of the extraordinary contributions each of you makes to ensure the continued growth of our institution’s excellence. Unfortunately, this is a statewide mandate that the Governor plans to impose in order to mitigate reductions in jobs and programs.

Along with our strong enrollment, the cost containment measures that we all have been working through over the past few years have made a very positive impact in our ability to address these shortfalls in state funding. Nonetheless, significant challenges remain. Many components of the proposed budget will be debated in the upcoming weeks, and their outcomes are still to be determined. The pressures to restore funding to impacted agencies will continue to place significant pressure on higher education’s allocated budget. We will keep you apprised of further developments in this regard.

Regards,

Bill Scoggins

M. W. Scoggins
President
COLORADO SCHOOL OF MINES