



Legislative Testimony

FY 2024 Operating Budget

House Appropriations Committee
Delegate Benjamin S. Barnes, *Chair*

Education and Economic Development Subcommittee
Delegate Stephanie Smith, *Chair*

February 15, 2023

Senate Budget and Taxation Committee
Senator Guy Guzzone, *Chair*

Education, Business and Administration Subcommittee
Senator Nancy J. King, *Chair*

February 16, 2023

Dr. David K. Wilson, *President*

morgan.edu



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STATE UNIVERSITY

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TESTIMONY

Fiscal Year 2024 Operating Budget Morgan State University

David K. Wilson, President
February 2023

Chair and members of the Committee, I thank you for the opportunity to testify on the Governor's fiscal year 2024 budget allowance for Morgan State University (MSU) and to provide you with an update on the University since last session.



First, I thank both Governor Moore and former Governor Hogan for their support of higher education. I also extend my thanks to the members of the General Assembly, particularly this Committee, for your strong and continued support of Morgan State University. Our analyst, Ms. Kelly Norton, has done an excellent job of analyzing our budget and, as part of my testimony, I will address the comments and recommendations she has identified.

VISION STATEMENT

Morgan State University is the premier public urban research university in Maryland, known for excellence in teaching, intensive research, effective public service and community engagement. Morgan prepares diverse and competitive graduates for success in a global, interdependent society.

MISSION STATEMENT

Morgan State University serves the community, region, state, nation and world as an intellectual and creative resource by supporting, empowering and preparing high-quality, diverse graduates to lead the world. The University offers innovative, inclusive and distinctive educational experiences to a broad cross section of the population in a comprehensive range of disciplines at the baccalaureate, master's, doctoral and professional degree levels. Through collaborative pursuits, scholarly research, creative endeavors and dedicated public service, the University gives significant priority to addressing societal problems, particularly those prevalent in urban communities.

INTRODUCTION

As Morgan enters its 156th year of existence, we do so, humbly, in full recognition of the paths paved for us by our visionary founders and those who followed them. These brave leaders did not lead from a paradigm where they focused all of their energy on what they did not have; quite the contrary, they adapted to the reality as it existed, evaluated the resources at their disposal and then leveraged them to obtain what they needed to found an institution with a very specific mission in mind. For more than 15 decades, the institution they established has been triumphant in its mission of educating tens of thousands of students who have led and are leading the world. Today, the University stands poised to usher in a new era of strategic growth and continued ascendancy, building upon Morgan State University's well-earned reputation as an institutional leader. We aim to chart an intentional pathway, grounded in institutional legacy, to effectively position Morgan State University at the forefront of the higher educational enterprise to meet contemporary and foreseeable challenges and opportunities and to achieve academic preeminence.



TRANSFORMATION MORGAN 2030: LEADING THE FUTURE – 2021–30 Strategic Plan

Our Strategic Plan reflects our continuous pursuit of excellence and a renewed commitment to fulfilling our vital mission. Our plan boldly puts forth the goal of elevating Morgan State University as a leading and nationally recognized urban research HBCU institution that has justifiably secured Carnegie classification as an R1 institution by 2030. It outlines six interconnected strategic goals that provide a framework for managing needed organizational change and preparing the University to serve and compete at the highest attainable level. Accomplishments and strides toward each of the six strategic goals are highlighted below.

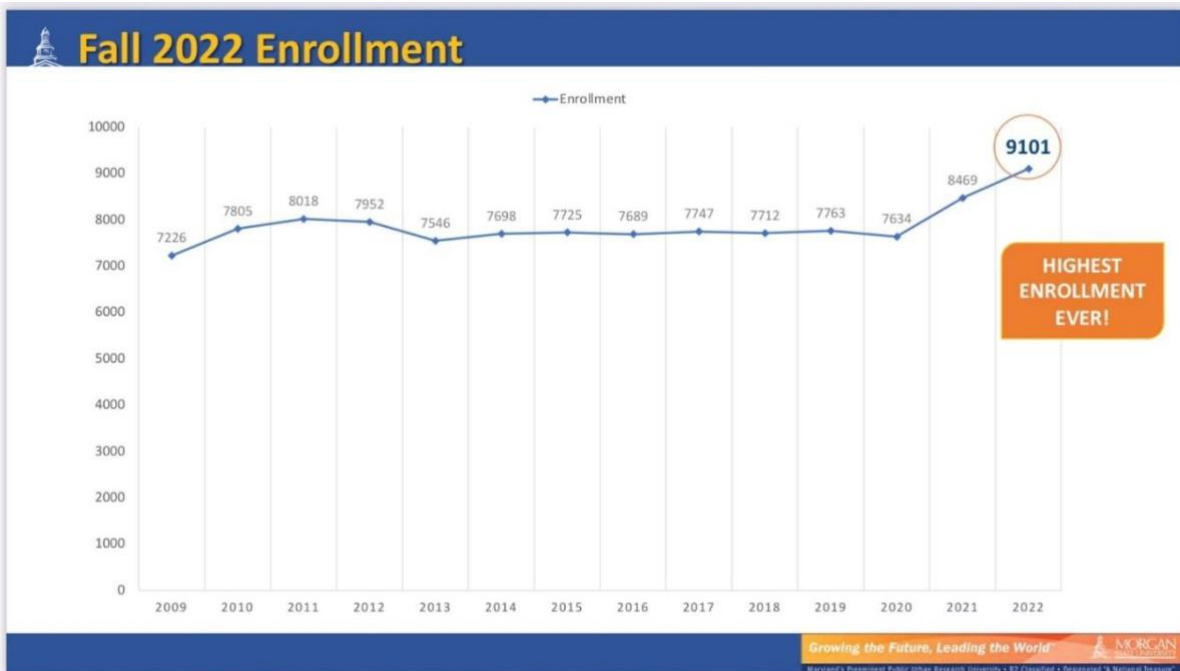
GOAL 1	Enhance Student Success and Wellbeing Provide students with a comprehensive educational and transformative experience that actualizes their full potential and empowers them to emerge as confident and competent global citizens and dynamic leaders in their selected careers and communities.
GOAL 2	Implement Faculty Ascendancy and Staff Development Initiatives The University will implement a broad range of human resource development initiatives for the benefit of faculty and staff.
GOAL 3	Elevate Morgan's Status to R1 Very High Doctoral Research University Over the next ten years, Morgan will emerge as a R1 doctoral research university fully engaged in basic and applied research and creative interdisciplinary inquiries undergirded and sustained through increased research grants and contracts.
GOAL 4	Expand and Improve a Campus-Wide Infrastructure to Support Operational Excellence and Increase Overall Institutional Capacity Morgan will advance new construction, capital improvement, deferred maintenance, and campus safety projects in keeping with the University's evolving master plan.
GOAL 5	Serve as the Premier Anchor Institution for Baltimore City and Beyond Morgan will expand and deepen its role as a recognized anchor institution with broad social and economic impact.
GOAL 6	Accelerate Global Education Initiatives and Expand the University's International Footprint Morgan will enhance its study abroad program and promote global awareness and intercultural competencies through its diverse curricular and co-curricular programs and activities.

Goal 1: Enhance Student Success and Wellbeing

Morgan strives to create an educational environment that enhances student success by offering new academic programs and holistic co-curricular activities in a welcoming, belonging, diverse and inclusive campus community. Ultimately, the goal is to provide students with a comprehensive educational and transformative experience that actualizes their full potential and empowers them to emerge as confident and competent global citizens and dynamic leaders in their selected careers and communities.

▪ **Student Enrollment**

Following the worst of the COVID-19 pandemic, when higher education enrollment declined nationally, Morgan’s enrollment growth percentage has been among the largest among four-year institutions in the state. The University has experienced record-breaking enrollment for the second consecutive year: 8,469 in 2021 and 9,101 in 2022, an all-time high. This represents a 7.5% growth for the 2021–2022 academic year and an 18% increase over the pre-pandemic number in Fall 2018. Morgan is continuing to buck the national enrollment trend projected by the National Center for Education Statistics, which had four-year colleges and universities in the U.S. continuing to decline by another 1.6% year-over-year in Fall 2022.



- **Transfer and Out-of-State Student** – Enrollment experienced significant gains. Among new students enrolled for the current academic year, 56% are non-resident students – the largest out-of-state student population in school history – representing more than 40 states and 65 countries. Overall, approximately 67% of the University’s enrolled students are from Maryland.
- **International Students** – Concurrent with its overall rise in student enrollment, the University also experienced significant growth in our number of international students, whose percentage of the total increased from 5.4% to 10.7% over the past year. The percentage of students who identified as Hispanic reached 4.5%.
- **Undocumented Immigrants** – In further support of our internationalization initiatives, the University is extending a hand to undocumented immigrants who want to earn a degree. The University has partnered with TheDream.US to offer 10 scholarships to undocumented students who graduate from a Maryland high school. Morgan is the first HBCU to offer this scholarship from TheDream.US in Maryland and the second college in the state to do so. Undocumented students are not eligible for federal financial aid but can receive some state or private funds. Students will receive \$33,000 over the course of four years, which will cover tuition and fees. The scholarship does not cover housing. However, because this is a competitive scholarship, many of the awardees may qualify for university merit awards to help cover campus housing.



■ **Retention**

Our success in retaining students is increasing the impact of our enrollment gains, as Morgan has recorded a retention rate of more than 70% for 12 consecutive years. Factors contributing to the steady gains include a mix of operational strategies, e.g., optimizing financial aid and astute allocation of institutional aid.

■ **Cost of Education**

For the past three consecutive years, the University has held student tuition and fees flat. We understand the economic challenges that our students and their families have faced during the COVID pandemic, and Morgan did not want to exacerbate matters. However, as much as we would prefer not to raise tuition for several more years, such an approach is simply not fiscally prudent.

- **Maryland’s 529 College Investment Program** – The University administration is aware of the problems with this popular prepaid college trust tuition program, which have adversely affected nearly 500 families across the state. Morgan is willing to work with Maryland students and families experiencing challenges with the 529 Program.

■ **Much-Needed On-Campus Housing**

Last fall, coinciding with the historic enrollment, the University opened Thurgood Marshall Residence Hall. The 10-story, 229,797-gross-square-foot, state-of-the-art living and learning facility is the first new residence hall erected on Morgan’s campus in more than 30 years. The University will construct a second new residential hall adjacent to the Thurgood Marshall housing complex, which will be connected via a ground-level, 30,000- square-foot dining hall. The second new housing facility is scheduled to open in 2024 with 604 beds. These facilities are quite expensive to build; therefore, we call on the State to assist us with a special appropriation to renovate existing student housing and build additional housing stock on campus.



■ **New High-Demand Academic Degree Programs**

Since 2020, Morgan has introduced more than 30 new programs, increasing its total degree offerings to more than 140. In the past year alone, the University launched nine new degree programs, many of which began as ideas birthed and developed by MSU faculty. Many of these academic offerings are not only innovative — aligning with Morgan’s strategic plan — they are also unique among programs offered by higher education institutions in Maryland. Among the latest program offerings are a Bachelor of Fine Arts in Musical Theatre, a Bachelor of Science in Coastal Science and Policy, a Bachelor of Science in Sustainable Urban Environmental Engineering, a Master of



Science in Applied Neuroscience, Industrial Engineering (Ph.D./M.S.), Sustainable and Resilient Infrastructure Engineering (Ph.D./M.S.), Computer and Electrical Systems Engineering (Ph.D./M.S.), Secure Embedded Systems Engineering (Ph.D.) and a Doctor of Social Work (D.S.W.). Other new programs are doing quite well. They include a Bachelor of Science in Interior Design (launched in 2018), a Bachelor of Science in Mechatronics Engineering and a Master of Science in Advanced Computing (both launched in Fall 2021). Morgan is the only university in Maryland to offer each of the three programs. The 12 programs just mentioned are in addition to 18 interdisciplinary degree programs approved by the Maryland Higher Education Commission in 2021. Morgan utilizes these 18 programs to attract students who have

some college credits but no degrees. Named **Morgan Completes You**, the programs are offered by our new College of Interdisciplinary and Continuing Studies (CICS).

▪ **World Stage Recognition**

This year, Morgan students have displayed their skills in impressive fashion, earning victories in various national competitions:

- **Amazon Web Services (AWS) HBCU Business Case Competition** – AWS hosted the event in support of the White House Initiative on Advancing Educational Equity, Excellence and Economic Opportunity. At the conclusion of the case competition, Morgan emerged triumphant, having three of its four teams take first, second and third place for the University. Students used what they had learned in the classroom in the areas of cybersecurity, artificial intelligence and machine learning, mobile computing, internet of things (IoT) and quantum computing to propel them to the top of the contenders.



- **‘Moguls in the Making’ Entrepreneurial Pitch Competition** – Following a spirited three-day tournament for the Fourth Annual Moguls in the Making pitch competition, the Morgan State University team placed second in a field of 15 HBCU teams. Each member of Morgan’s team won \$10,000 in scholarship funds for their collective effort. The competition is designed to foster the development of innovative and impactful solutions to economic mobility challenges using vital business skills.



- **Zillow’s HBCU Housing Hackathon** – Zillow’s second annual competition challenged participants to develop new technologies to help consumers during their journey to find a home. The competition, which drew more than 200 students from Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs), awarded top prizes to teams that developed innovations to help renters and first-time buyers find their dream homes. ZillowBears, a team of four Morgan State University students, won first place and \$20,000 for its “Z-Save” application, which estimates monthly mortgage costs and lets users deposit that amount into a virtual wallet that tracks their payment trends. The app also shows lenders data points to help determine whether potential homeowners qualify for a mortgage and offers them a way to prove creditworthiness outside the traditional credit scoring system. Zillow will donate \$25,000 to Morgan’s Computer Science program as part of the first-place prize.



Team ZillowBears from Morgan State University won first place at Zillow’s HBCU Housing Hackathon: (L-R) Nanfwang Dawurang, Godsheritage Adeoyo, Oluwadara Dina and Saad Nadeem. (Photo courtesy of Zillow Group)

- **Under Armour Career Combine Competition**

A team of four Morgan State University (MSU) students won \$40,000 in scholarships from the Under Armour (UA) Career Combine, after applying what they learned from UA-led professional education sessions in a case study competition, pitting them against fellow MSU student teams to earn a scholarship award from the Baltimore-based global sports footwear and active apparel manufacturer.

Nearly 50 students collaborated in groups to develop a real-world solution in the inaugural UA Career Combine competition. Each member of the winning team, Team Inspire, earned \$10,000 after the team developed a campaign to amplify mental health awareness.

The Career Combine is the result of the growing partnership announced last year between Under Armour and Morgan. For its part in playing a greater role in fostering a more diverse talent pipeline, Under Armour piloted an Historically Black College and University (HBCU) initiative designed to cultivate opportunities for student success in the classroom and beyond. Through scholarships and beneficial workforce readiness programs — like the Career Combine implemented at Morgan — Under Armour aims to address longstanding diversity, equity and inclusion (DEI) deficiencies within the athletic footwear and apparel industry.



MSU is the first HBCU to team up with Under Armour to provide this level of opportunity for its scholars, making it the blueprint. And given the success of the inaugural activation at Morgan, Under Armour plans to advance the effort and forge comparable partnerships with other HBCUs and HSIs (Hispanic-Serving Institutions) to bolster the talent pipeline.

Acknowledging the high number of participating students and the quality of case study submissions, UA organizers expanded the scholarships awarded in the competition from \$40,000 (covering one winning group) to \$50,000 (to include a second). Morgan *Excellence* and *Innovation* — two of our six Core Values — proved to be a real difference-maker, as the University’s Team Two Forward earned a second-place nod for their impressive submission. Team members each received \$2,000 scholarships for their efforts.

- **Goldman Sachs Market Madness**

Morgan State 2022 Goldman Sachs Market Madness Team

The team placed third out of 24 competing teams, earning a \$250,000 donation to Morgan State University from the Goldman Sachs Foundation — **\$750K over two years.**



Laila Carter
Strategic Communication
Major;
Legal Studies Minor
2024



Godwin Eke
Computer Engineering
Major
2024



Lamar Brooks
Social Work Major,
2024



Shalom Dades
Electrical Engineering
Major, 2024

Goal 2: Implement Faculty Ascendancy and Staff Development Initiatives

Morgan encourages and supports its faculty, staff and students in all forms of scholarship, including the discovery and application of knowledge in teaching and learning and in developing innovative products and processes. The University has some of the world’s best and most recognized faculty in higher education. Not only does Morgan

attract top faculty from around the globe, but our faculty are also recognized by the world's top organizations, including the American Association for the Advancement of Science, the American Academy of Environmental Engineers and Scientists, and the American Academy of Arts and Sciences.

▪ **Researchers From Morgan Included Among the Science and Technology Policy Fellows Named to the 50th Class**

Three new Fellows with Morgan State University ties have been selected to join the American Association for the Advancement of Science's (AAAS) 50th class of the Science and Technology Policy Fellowships (STPF). Craig Scott, Ph.D., professor of Electrical and Computer Engineering, Archana Sharma, Ph.D., associate professor in Morgan's graduate Landscape Architecture Program (MLA), and Adejare (Jay) Atanda, Dr.P.H., a recent graduate of Morgan's School of Community Health and Policy (SCHP), are included among the 300 highly trained scientists and engineers selected for a one-year assignment to assist in informing actionable, science-based policies throughout the U.S. government.

The STPF program supports evidence-based policymaking by leveraging the knowledge and analytical mindset of science and engineering experts, and trains leaders for a strong U.S. science and technology enterprise. Fellows represent a full spectrum of disciplines, backgrounds and career stages.

Dr. Sharma was chosen as the first AAAS Fellow to serve in the U.S. Department of Transportation as an equity policy research advisor. Dr. Scott will serve as an advanced manufacturing policy Fellow at the National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST), where he will be supported by the American Society of Mechanical Engineers, while Dr. Atanda, who earned his doctorate in Public Health Analysis and Epidemiology from Morgan, will serve as a Policy Advisor at the Department of Homeland Security's Countering Weapons of Mass Destruction Office.



▪ **Advancements, Invention and Discovery Recognized at Morgan's Fifth Annual Innovation of the Year Awards**

• **Intellectual Property Innovation Award** – Morgan faculty or students who have created outstanding innovations in their research field are recognized with this award.

- Dr. Mansoureh Jiehani, Dr. Kofi Nyarko, Dr. Eazaz Sadeghvaziri, Dr. Anam Ardeshiri – *Integrated Automated Wheelchair and Adapted Automated Vehicle System*. This invention integrates two modes of travel with Automated Vehicle (AV) technology. An Automated Wheelchair (AW) enables people with multiple types of disabilities to make short distance trips independently. The AW is designed to be programmable to navigate to its destination through the best route with minimal intervention. An Adapted Automated Vehicle (AAV) will enable people with disabilities to make long-distance trips.



- Dr. Dereje Seifu – *Carbon Nanotube Magnetic Sensor to Monitor Metals in Water*. This technology can detect metals in tiny amounts from a contaminated water source. Carbon nanotubes (CNTs) intercalated with magnetic nanoparticles of cobalt ferrite are used for detection, identification and quantitation of chromium by observing changes in the magnetic properties of the composite.
- Dr. Kevin Kornegay, Dr. Tsion Yimer, Edmund Smith – *Detection and Survival Method against Adversarial Attacks on Automated Systems*. The inventors have developed a new technique that employs measurements previously not utilized for security purposes to detect anomalies between operational and hidden sensors and introduces a mitigation strategy to use in hidden sensors to respond to attacks.

Automated systems may include those that are a part of a greater Internet of Things (IoT) system and can include automated driving systems and controls on numerous types of devices.

- Dr. Md Mahmudur Rahman – *Accurate Sickle Cell Detection Method Using Deep Transfer Learning*. This invention focuses on recognizing visual patterns in blood smear images by applying Deep Transfer Learning with three pre-trained models to detect sickle cell disease. The models are compared to determine the highest score of prediction and accuracy.

- **Morgan Community Innovator Award** – Presented to faculty, staff and students who have contributed to Morgan’s innovation landscape.

- Dr. Kimberly Warren (Professor, College of Liberal Arts/Psychology Department) – developed a Global Health service-learning study abroad program for her students. This program, which takes place in Guatemala, involves a short-term (eight–nine- day) trip during which students live with a host family, participate in one-on-one Spanish lessons, provide free health services to the community and participate in cultural activities. Students not traveling abroad are also involved through study-at-home interactions.



- Maia Maclin (Operations Manager, Division of Enrollment Management and Student Success) – developed and implemented the Hiver email management system to improve the efficiency and output of her team. The system auto- assigns every incoming email to a shared inbox. The system manages inquiries and evenly distributes workload among the team.

- Samuel Oludayo Alamu (Doctoral Student, Industrial and Systems Engineering / Department of Industrial and Systems Engineering) – named as a co-inventor on six intellectual property disclosures, based on his efforts to increase bioenergy production through thermochemical processes. He has also made contributions to the development of combustion technology licensed by Cykloburn Technologies, LLC.



- **Innovation Leader Honorees** – Individuals recognized as Innovation Leaders are the inventors who have set the standard among their colleagues and peers and have taken innovation and experiential learning opportunities for their students to new heights.

- Dr. Kofi Nyarko – Information Science Innovation Leader
- Dr. Viji Sittther – Life Science Innovation Leader
- Dr. Seong Lee – Physical Science Innovation Leader

- **U.S. Patent Awardees** – Presented to Morgan inventors who have been issued a U.S. Patent from the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office during the previous year.

- Dr. Kevin Kornegay, Dr. Hailu Kassa – *Adaptive Energy Efficient Cellular Network*, U.S. Patent No. 11,240,752
- Dr. Viji Sittther, Dr. Benham Tabatabai, Dr. Kadir Aslan – *Composition and Method for Enhancing Photosynthetic Efficiency*, U.S. Patent No. 11,162,067



- **A First in Morgan's 155-Year History**

On June 1, 2022, Dena Freeman-Patton assumed her role as the new Vice President and Director of Intercollegiate Athletics. With President Wilson's selection, Freeman-Patton became the first woman in Morgan's 155-year history hired to lead its athletic operations. As an administrator and executive in intercollegiate athletics, Freeman-Patton brings nearly 25 years of experience. She is also one of five women serving as athletic directors in the Mid-Eastern Athletic Conference (MEAC), which is made up of eight HBCUs.



Goal 3: Elevate Morgan's Status to R1 Very High Doctoral Research University

As Morgan continues to position itself to elevate our national standing among American research universities from that of high research (R2) to very high research (R1) in the coming few years, we recognize the vital efforts of our faculty and research staff toward this goal. During FY 2022, Morgan received 126 new funding commitments totaling a record-high \$74.1 million.

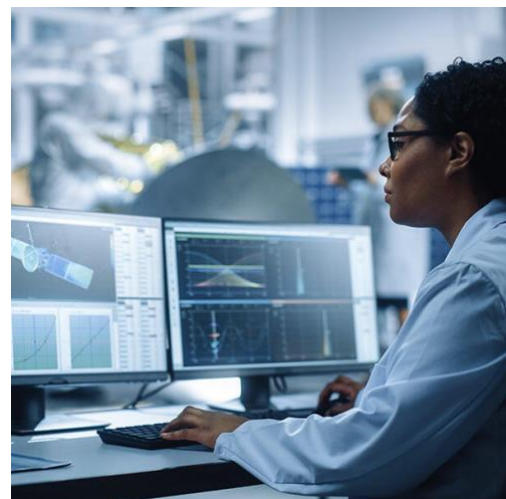
- **HBCU Rise Act**

The HBCU Rise Act, bipartisan legislation enacted by the Maryland congressional delegation, will help boost research opportunities at Historically Black Colleges and Universities in Maryland. The legislation requires the Department of Defense to provide more federal grants to HBCUs. The act is part of the fiscal year 2023 National Defense Authorization Act, which includes a provision that calls for a new program to help HBCUs reach high research activity status. The funding commitment to Morgan totals \$5 million in new research grants.



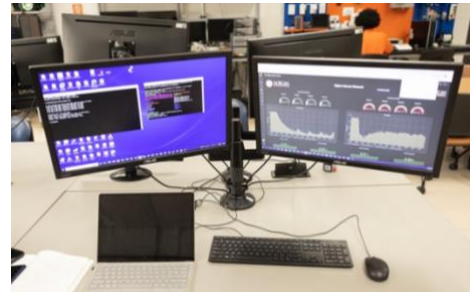
- **STEMM Opportunity Alliance**

The University is part of a \$1.2-billion STEMM Initiative, the STEMM Opportunity Alliance (SOA), a new effort by the White House's Office of Science and Technology Policy to level the playing field in science, technology, engineering, mathematics and medicine (STEMM) fields. The Alliance is a coordinated national effort to achieve equity in institutions and organizations across America's science and technology fields. The SOA is made up of more than 90 partners, including national associations, community organizations, corporations and schools, such as Morgan. The initiative plans to target five factors that contribute to disproportionality in STEMM: (1) providing educators with the necessary support and resources, (2) addressing the current teacher shortage, (3) closing the funding gap, (4) scaling-up solutions that weed out bias and discrimination and (5) promoting accountability across the STEMM ecosystem. There has not been a coordinated national effort toward achieving equity and excellence in the U.S. science and technology ecosystem. The SOA endeavors to coordinate across sectors and silos in a way that will make a substantial impact and bring about transformative change.



■ **STEM Research Grants Funding**

● **Department of Defense (DoD)** – Last November, Morgan received a five-year, \$9-million grant from DoD’s Office of Naval Research, which will fund research for diverse knowledge bases in artificial intelligence and machine learning. The grant will also support student research on these topics at the postdoctorate, graduate and undergraduate levels. Much of this research will be conducted by the University’s recently launched Center for Equitable Artificial Intelligence and Machine Learning Systems and our Cybersecurity Assurance and Policy Center.



● **National Science Foundation (NSF)** – The University also received an NSF grant for \$596,383 to research human responsiveness to signs of fire in different situations. The findings from this research will help improve fire safety systems.

■ **Research Professorships**

Morgan received \$1 million, which will be matched by \$1 million in funds received from philanthropist MacKenzie Scott, to establish a new Endowed Chair for the Center for Urban Health Equity. The award will be a boon to the burgeoning center’s ability to recruit and attract the expertise necessary for growth and expansion of the center’s mission, which is to address the root causes of urban health disparities through asset-based, community-driven research and practice. For a second consecutive year, the Maryland Department of Commerce has awarded Morgan State University funding via the Maryland E-Innovation Initiative, a state program created to spur basic and applied research in scientific and technical fields at Maryland-based colleges and universities, to support a new research professorship.

Goal 4: Expand and Improve a Campus-Wide Infrastructure to Support Operational Excellence and Increase Overall Institutional Capacity

Morgan will advance new construction, capital improvement, deferred maintenance and campus safety projects in keeping with the University’s evolving master plan. The University also endeavors to implement an information technology plan to accommodate and optimize operational excellence in all aspects of its service delivery. This expanded and improved infrastructure will accommodate a projected increase in student enrollment as well as a surging demand for online learning options. The University is appreciative of the State’s investment toward these ends, to date, in Morgan’s new and existing facilities. Some of these investments include:

● Opening a new, 670-bed, \$105-million residential hall (Thurgood Marshall) — the first new residential facility on the campus in more than 30 years;



- Breaking ground on a second residential facility (\$120 million, 604 beds) slated to open in fall 2024;



- Continuing construction on budget and on time to open a \$171-million Health and Human Services Building in summer 2024;



- Securing a nearly \$250-million commitment to build a new science complex, which is being designed by the nation's largest African American-owned architectural firm, Moody Nolan, and is on track to open in early 2027;

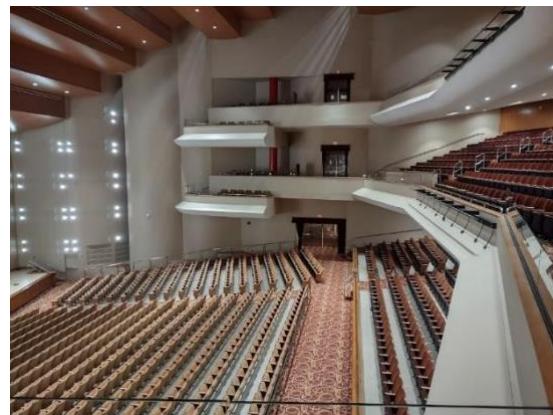
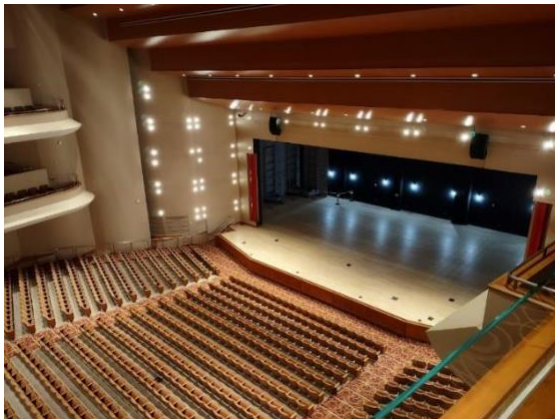
- Nearing completion of a totally renovated Hurt Gym;



- Completing a new Public Safety Building on our West Campus adjacent to Northwood Commons;



- Upgrading the Murphy Fine Arts Center’s Gilliam Concert Hall; and



- Completing the bid process to begin work on completely landscaping the West Campus (*near Northwood Commons*).

Goal 5: Serve as the Premier Anchor Institution for Baltimore City and Beyond

At Morgan, it is commonly understood that our emerging leaders will be mission-oriented and will ultimately aspire to be a force for good in the world. There has always been an explicit expectation of our students to heed the call to servant leadership, thereby dedicating themselves to the broader struggle of overcoming and eradicating barriers to social justice, economic empowerment and engaged citizenship. That leadership imperative is further expressed in our renewed strategic intention to deepen and expand our role as an anchor institution in Baltimore City and beyond.

- **Proposed New Medical School**

Morgan State University is on track to be the first Historically Black College and University in nearly half a century to open an affiliated medical school. The school is scheduled to welcome its first class in Fall 2024. To date, only four HBCUs have affiliated medical schools: Howard University College of Medicine, Charles R. Drew University of Medicine and Science, Meharry Medical College and Morehouse School of Medicine. The number of physicians nationwide is expected to plummet over the next 10 years, according to a report released in 2020 by the Association of American Medical Colleges. The Association estimates that by 2033 there will be



a shortage of at least 54,100 to 139,000 physicians. Graduates of Morgan’s affiliated medical school will contribute to the number of physicians with holistic training, known as DOs, who are licensed physicians who practice in every specialty area and account for approximately 11% of the medical field. Only 5% of doctors across the U.S. identify as Black or African American, and Morgan State University leaders say that means increasing diversity in the medical field is crucial.

Goal 6: Accelerate Global Education Initiatives and Expand the University’s International Footprint

This goal reflects and affirms a distinctive strategic thrust to internationalize our curriculum and expand the University’s global footprint. In an age of rapid globalization, we seek to extend our reach into countries in critical need of educational services and interventions. This will require forging enduring cross-national partnerships, enhancing international student and faculty diversity on campus and developing effective models and educational delivery systems targeting underserved populations. We view such initiatives as a logical and necessary extension of the *Morgan Global* leadership imperative finding fuller expression on a much wider international stage.

▪ **International Trips to Turkey, Ghana, Nigeria and Kenya**

As part of Morgan State University’s continuing efforts to expand its global footprint and enhance strategic partnerships abroad, a cohort of staffers representing the University’s Division of International Affairs (DIA) visited four countries last spring — two in Western Africa, one in Eastern Africa and one in the Middle East and Northern Africa (MENA) region.

- **Istanbul, Turkey** – The Morgan contingent visited the city’s top four private universities: Istanbul Aydin University, Beykoz University, Fenerbahce University and Bahcesehir University. The meetings proved to be fruitful, resulting in three of the universities’ agreement to pursue a memorandum of understanding (MOU) enabling their students to continue their education in the United States, at Morgan. Each of the participating international students would enroll in one of the interdisciplinary bachelor’s degree programs offered through CICS.



- **Accra, Ghana** – The MSU leadership team met with the new president and provost of the African University College of Communication (AUCC), before ultimately engaging with Webster University (Ghana Campus), Academic City University, University of Cape Coast and the University of Ghana. The discussion was centered on the development of experiential global learning programs (including virtual exchange and collaborative online international learning, COIL) as well as collaboration in degree programs, teaching and research.



- **Lagos and Abuja, Nigeria** – Dr. Hakeem Tijani, executive director for the Office of Global Partnerships–Africa at Morgan, met with the leadership of the TETFund, Digital Bridge Institute, National Universities Commission, National Open University of Nigeria (NOUN) and Olusegun Agagu University of Science and Technology (OAUSTECH). The TETFund’s new executive secretary, Arc. Sonny Echono, was briefed about the progress of the organization’s scholars and Fellows now studying at Morgan. During the meeting, Arc. Echono reiterated the agency’s commitment to its partnership with Morgan and promised to visit the campus with his team. Mohammed Ajiya, president and CEO of Digital Bridge Institute (DBI), expressed delight in the partnership and offered one of DBI’s campuses for Morgan’s use. Similarly, the vice chancellors of NOUN and OAUSTECH also requested formal agreements with Morgan that extend beyond the initial TETFund general agreement, which was signed in 2020.



- **Nairobi, Kenya** – Dr. Yacob Astatke, Assistant Vice President for International Affairs, met with the leadership of the Kenya Bureau of Standards (KEBS). The meeting was held to encourage KEBS researchers to consider continuing their education through Morgan’s various doctoral programs over the next three to five years.



- **MSU Alumni Association Establishes a Chapter in Kenya**

Morgan reached an historic milestone last October with the launch of a Kenyan chapter of the MSU Alumni Association (MSUAA) – the first international chapter chartered by the association. The ceremony took place in the capital city of Nairobi, after more than a year of collaboration between Morgan’s Office of Alumni Relations and Morgan alumni in Kenya. The chapter will be vital to the University’s effort to open a virtual or satellite campus in Nairobi. Chapter President Margaret Mukira, of Morgan’s Class of 1994, anticipates that the chapter will become a major force in student recruitment for Morgan in Kenya; expansion of the MSUAA to other countries; and development of partnerships between Morgan and universities and communities in Kenya.



BILLION-DOLLAR PLAN FOR STATE INVESTMENT IN MORGAN OVER THE NEXT 10 YEARS

The various construction projects now in progress, and the tremendous facilities being produced, provide indisputable evidence of a thriving living-learning campus environment populated by students, faculty and staff collectively committed to intellectual discovery, cutting-edge research and the interdisciplinary and transdisciplinary search for solutions to social challenges that are growing in size and complexity. Our bold strategic plan puts forth the goal of elevating Morgan State University as a leading, nationally recognized research institution that has justifiably secured Carnegie classification as an R1 institution. The fulfillment of this plan is largely resource contingent. We must embrace a well-coordinated approach aimed at significantly expanding our monetary resource base and reinforcing our financial solvency in the years ahead. This can be achieved by conveying our overall investment-worthiness to our partners at the State level, the private sector and the broader corporate and philanthropic community, to secure much-needed additional State funding and research and training grants.

▪ **FY 2024 Operating Budget Request**

It is important to emphasize the relevancy of public urban research universities like Morgan State University and why continued investment in Morgan is vital to its success and advancement. As exhibited by our Over-the-Target Operating Budget Request to the Governor last year, the need is modest to provide quality programs and services that will impact current and future generations of Maryland citizens. The initiatives submitted to the Governor are outlined as follows:

National Center for the Elimination of Educational Disparities	\$3.6M
Center for Education and Research in Microelectronics	\$3.1M
Health and Human Services Operating Funding	\$6.8M
Center on Brain Science	\$3.2M
Center for the Preservation and Advancement of Democracy	<u>\$1.5M</u>
Total	\$18.2M

We are very appreciative of the Governor’s recommended support to enable us to launch several new and unique centers that will produce research that will impact the City of Baltimore, the State of Maryland and beyond.

With regard to our capital budget, funding for projects in the State’s Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) for Morgan is paramount, to include: the New Health and Human Services Building (Phase II), New Science Center (Phases I and II), Campus Expansion (Phase I – Lake Clifton Demolition), Carter-Grant-Wilson Renovation, PEARL Oyster Lab, CBEIS Concrete Lab, campus-wide electric upgrades, Jenkins Demolition, a new engineering building, a multipurpose research building to house our growing number of research centers, and a multipurpose academic convocation and events center, to be constructed on the 59-acre Lake Clifton property to be conveyed to the University. Taken together, these capital investments would amount to approximately \$1 billion over the next seven years. We are hopeful that the State of Maryland will continue to see the value of investing in its National Treasure and will understand the return on that investment in terms of thousands of jobs created, billions in overall economic impact, the closing of the diversity achievement gap in critical educational disciplines and, ultimately, the complete transformation of northeastern Baltimore.

CLOSING

Thank you, again, and on behalf of Morgan State University, I request your support of the Governor’s recommendations for FY 2024 and for the additional priorities we outlined above. I will respond to the issues presented by the analyst and will be happy to respond to any additional questions you may have.



RESPONSES TO ISSUES & RECOMMENDED ACTIONS

Department of Legislative Services' Analysis

ISSUES

Comment 1 (Page 5): The President should discuss the retention strategies in place to ensure that recent large cohorts academically persist at the university and what has led to the recent increase in the acceptance rate.

Response: The University has a wide array of retention strategies in place and has, in fact, won several national awards over the past few years for its retention program. The University utilizes numerous best practices including a six-week summer bridge program for students with demonstrated potential but whose academic profiles do not quite meet the University's admission standards (CASA Academy); a summer bridge program for incoming freshmen majoring in Engineering (PACE) designed to increase their likelihood of successful and timely degree completion; an early alert and response system for faculty to alert students and advisors to students showing signs of being in jeopardy (Starfish); Degree Works, the University's degree auditing system; a free Tutoring Center that offers one-on-one peer tutoring in-person or online; 24-7 online tutoring through SmarThinking; mandatory four-day residential summer orientation program (Access Orientation); centralized professional advising for first-year students; and a second-year experience program designed to engage all students returning to Morgan for the second year in out-of-classroom (experiential) learning opportunities to enhance their career readiness skills.

In addition to academic strategies, the University also employs numerous other strategies to retain students, including strategic use of need-based institutional aid to assist students with demonstrated financial need, and a student emergency fund, the Growing the Future Fund, to support students who may experience emergency housing, food, transportation, technology or other needs. We also operate a Food Resource Center. Our Beyond Financial Aid website (<https://www.morgan.edu/bfa>) provides information to support students who may be experiencing housing insecurity, have transportation needs or need other financial or social support. The University has a case manager to assist students experiencing homelessness or other challenges. The University has also invested significantly since the pandemic in expanding our mental health resources to help address the increase being experienced nationwide in mental health issues among college students.

One new retention effort that we anticipate playing a vital role in our ability to continue to maintain and even increase our historic retention rate (12 straight years above 70%) is our partnership with the National Institute for Student Success (NISS) at Georgia State University. NISS is working with us to identify and resolve institutional barriers to equity and college completion. One of the key challenges that NISS identified during their diagnostic analysis was the stopping out of Pell students. Beginning this spring, Morgan will be working with our NISS consultants to decrease the achievement gap between our Pell and non-Pell students through a multi-pronged approach, including tracking early warning signs of students facing financial risk and then providing proactive assistance to those students and addressing academic progression challenges, such as improving DFW rates in critical required courses.

In response to the question about what has led to the recent increase in the percentage of students Morgan accepts, this has been largely driven by two factors. First, as most institutions did during the pandemic, Morgan removed the barrier of standardized testing. This has led many bright and capable students who previously might have been denied admission on the basis of a test score to enter the University. In addition, Morgan’s visibility has grown exponentially over the past few years, and its value proposition has become increasingly recognized nationally. More students from across the country are electing to apply to Morgan, which is also increasing the number of students who are eligible for acceptance. It is important to note that while the percentage of students accepted has increased, our average GPA has remained stable and even increased slightly. For the Fall 2021 and 2022 freshman classes, which had higher acceptance rates, the average GPA was 3.04 and 3.07, respectively. For the Fall 2018 and Fall 2019 classes, which had lower acceptance rates, the average GPA was 2.98 and 3.04, respectively.

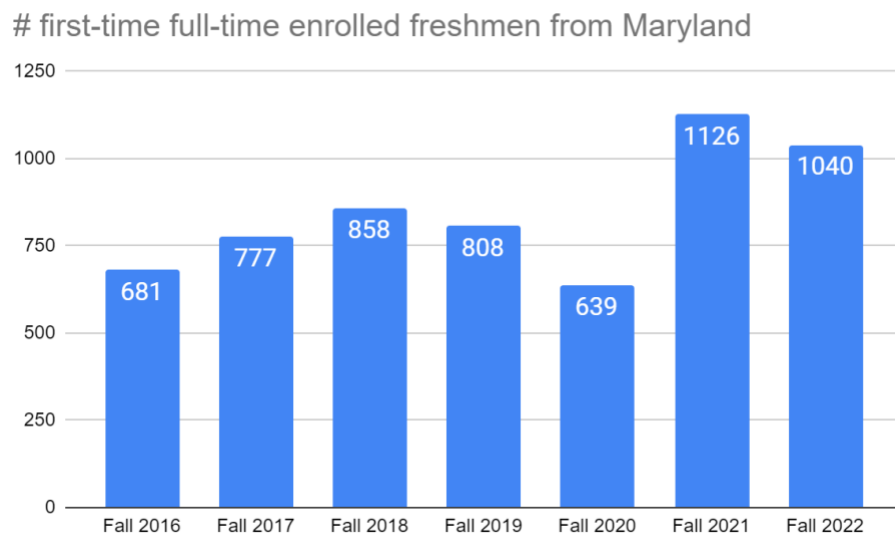
Comment 2 (Page 7): The President should discuss the growing out-of-state student population as MSU’s in-state student population is expected to decrease to 55% in fiscal 2023 and 2024.

Response: The number of Maryland public high school graduates has been declining in recent years, as has the percentage of public high school completers who become first-time, full-time college students. Further, Maryland is one of the largest net exporters of college students in the nation, ranking last in a recent article about which states gain and lose the most college students.¹ Given such demographic and enrollment challenges, the University has worked intentionally to diversify its market by increasing its recruitment efforts out of state and internationally. There has also been unprecedented media buzz around HBCUs in general over the past few years, as issues of social justice, diversity, equity and inclusion have taken center stage nationally. And, the widespread positive press Morgan has been receiving about its strong value proposition and high-profile gifts and partnerships has also led to increased exposure to, and appreciation of, the Morgan brand among prospective college students outside of Maryland.

These out-of-state students and their families create demand in the city and state for restaurants, retail establishments and hotels, as they come for campus tours and events and as they settle in here for the next four to six years of college. Those who remain in the state after college also contribute to building the tax base and brain trust within Maryland.

It is also important to note that the number of Maryland students in the freshman class has been increasing (except for the pandemic outlier year of fall 2020), even though, percentage-wise, Marylanders make up a smaller percentage of the freshman class. (See Chart 1.)

Chart 1



¹ <https://www.collegeraptor.com/find-colleges/articles/college-news-trends/map-states-where-students-move-and-leave-for-college/12/22/22>. See also <http://www.higheredinfo.org/dbrowser/index.php?submeasure=61&year=2018&level=nation&mode=data&state=>

Also, while the total undergraduate in-state population did decrease each year between 2015 and 2020, as noted in the analyst's report, the number of Maryland undergraduates enrolled is on the rebound. Overall undergraduate enrollment from Maryland increased 3% between fall 2020 and fall 2021 and increased another 3% from fall 2021 to fall 2022.

The University is working on new strategies to ensure that it continues to grow its in-state population at the same time that it continues to pursue out-of-state and international enrollment. The University has recently hired a new Director of Undergraduate Admission and Recruitment, who is reviewing and refining the University's in-state recruitment strategies. Those strategies include strengthening efforts to involve alumni chapters across the state in the recruitment and enrollment process; redefining recruitment territories based on market analysis and demographic data; reimagining our prospective and admitted student recruitment and yield programming to focus more on personalized and intentional connections with students, parents, school counselors and community-based organizations in the state; updating our strategic marketing and communications plan, including digital, print and social media campaigns and web content; and strengthening and expanding relationships with community colleges throughout the state.

Comment 3 (Page 20): The President should comment on the new positions and the progress being made to fill them.

Response: A large portion of the new positions are related to new research centers and additional faculty lines created with Chapter 41 funding for new academic degree programs and existing degree programs of distinction that need enhancement. The University is continually reviewing and processing requests to hire new faculty and employees to fill new and vacant positions. During FY23 and for the 2022–2023 academic year, about 20 such vacancies from Chapter 41 fund for key academic and staff positions are being recruited to ensure a sufficient level of personnel to meet the needs of students and the University's growing enrollment. There are 30 new positions in our three newly approved research centers for which we are in the process of recruiting.

Comment 4 (Page 25-26): MSU should address what efforts, if any, will be taken not to burden students with higher than necessary student debt, particularly students who will enroll before accreditation.

Response: Inflation has had a severe impact on the cost of attaining a medical degree. Identifying funding sources to support the medical school as a private entity, and correspondingly to reduce the tuition, and/or to offer scholarships and financial assistance to students, are challenging. With this in mind, we propose that the State of Maryland consider approving the medical school to come exclusively under Morgan State University, therefore, making it public and allowing us to leverage that status for various sources of support. We are prepared to present a proposal outlining the additional resources needed to make this happen. Such action would mean that the medical school would be the first public medical school at an HBCU in the nation, and the first one to open in 45 years. Also, President Wilson has been in serious conversations with the two medical schools in the State, and one has offered to become a serious and exclusive partner with us to stand up a world-class medical school with a focus on training primary and family care physicians. We have also had preliminary conversations with several leaders in the General Assembly about this possibility and are prepared to offer our proposal for consideration.

We recognize that the cost of attaining a medical degree from Maryland College of Osteopathic Medicine can be burdensome for the population we intend to serve. To that end, we have also drafted a proposal and presented it to a possible philanthropic partner to make a transformational gift that would provide scholarship support to offset some of the cost of tuition. The gift, if it materializes, will provide immediate scholarships for the first two classes and also fund an endowment that will provide partial funding for future medical school students. Morgan has a vested interest in ensuring students can pursue a medical degree with much lower amounts of student debt. We are committed to pursuing both of these approaches to assist us in addressing the major shortage of Black physicians in Maryland and around the nation.

Comment 5 (Page 24): *The President of MSU should comment on what actions have been taken to address the findings of the September 2022 audit report. The President should also specifically comment on what actions have been taken with regard to the audit's repeat findings and repeat recommendations. Due to the number of repeat audit findings contained in MSU's most recent fiscal compliance audit issued by OLA, the Department of Legislative Services (DLS) recommends adding budget bill language restricting funds in MSU until OLA submits a report indicating that corrective action has been taken to satisfactorily address the repeat findings contained in its audit report.*

Response: We are committed to resolving all the findings addressed in the September 2022 audit report — most corrective actions have already been implemented — and working with OLA to facilitate an effective and efficient follow-up review. A summary of the actions we have taken to address the findings follows.

- Finding 1* (student accounts receivables – student refunds and vendor oversight): We have implemented the necessary vendor oversight and independent internal procedures to assure student refunds are distributed, received, posted and accounted for properly and data are protected.
- Finding 2* (independent review of room and board adjustments): The individual who is responsible for conducting a review of room and board adjustments is independent, as certain information system privileges were revoked. This review is effective, fully documented, and supported by source records. The governing policy and procedures were revised, as recommended. We have reviewed the audit exceptions, taken the appropriate action and documented the results and justification.
- Finding 3* (independent review of residency status changes): We have revised the administrative review process to be independent and properly documented; however, this entails creating a new output report that is utilized by management to conduct the independent review. The report is being tested and will be put into production within the next 30 days.
- Finding 4 (independent review of student deferred payment plans): We have implemented a documented and independent supervisory review of all deferred payment plan agreements using output reports of recorded plans. We are in the process of developing and obtaining the necessary approval for establishing the maximum amount of a student's account balance that is allowed to be rolled into a subsequent semester without a deferred payment plan and is consistent with State law. This will be completed by the next Board of Regent's meeting in May 2023. Please note that State law only allows a student to carry a balance of \$250 without a payment plan, which is not congruent with a contemporary university's cost of attendance and administrative structure and process. We have thus engaged senior management at the other institutions of higher education in the State of Maryland (e.g., University System of Maryland and will do so with St. Mary's College of Maryland) to discuss with the legislature the need to raise the threshold accordingly.
- Finding 5 (timely referral of delinquent student accounts to the Central Collection Unit or CCU): We have established procedures to periodically review and refer delinquent student accounts to CCU in accordance with our approved deviation letter. The two accounts in question were sent to CCU, as recommended.
- Finding 6 (admission to the honors program and award of scholarships): The Executive Director position was created and filled. This individual revamped the honors program, whereby new criteria for admission and receiving aid were developed, approved and implemented. Rigorous reviews are conducted, based on original source documents, and eligibility criteria are strictly enforced. Management has reviewed the aid in question and has taken the appropriate action. The rationale and justification were documented and are available for inspection.
- Finding 7* (procurement, contract oversight, and disbursement): On December 21, 2022, we obtained the Board of Public Works' (BPW) retroactive approval for the security services procurement. We have also implemented temporary measures to address the audit findings, while working on the long-term solution to streamline the procurement and contract management process. This includes implementing a robust software program we have acquired. We have appointed specific individuals who are responsible for

monitoring vendor performance to ensure the terms of contracts are complied with and services are received before payment is rendered. We are rolling out a comprehensive training program.

- Findings 8*–10 (cybersecurity-related issues): We have implemented the cybersecurity-related recommendations, save a small portion that will be fully resolved within 30 days. Temporary measures have been taken to mitigate any risk.

* Denotes item repeated in full or part from preceding audit report.

RECOMMENDED ACTIONS

Recommendation 1 (Page 27): *provided that since Morgan State University (MSU) has had four or more repeat audit findings in the most recent fiscal compliance audit issued by the Office of Legislative Audits (OLA), \$500,000 of this agency's administrative appropriation may not be expended unless: (1) MSU has taken corrective action with respect to all repeat audit findings on or before November 1, 2023; and (2) a report is submitted to the budget committees by OLA listing each repeat audit finding along with a determination that each repeat finding was corrected. The budget committees shall have 45 days from the receipt of the report to review and comment to allow for funds to be released prior to the end of fiscal 2024.*

Response: The President agrees. We will work with the Legislative Auditor to coordinate and schedule the follow-up audit and ensure the corrective actions are implemented and ready for validation by the aforementioned date. In the meantime, I have directed the Office of Internal Audit to independently verify whether the stated correction measures adequately address the findings. Any gaps will be closed immediately.

Recommendation 2 (Page 27): *Report on the National Center for Elimination of Educational Disparities: Morgan State University (MSU) is launching a new center that will focus on altering the educational outcomes for Black, Latinx, and low-income children in public schools. The fiscal 2024 budget includes funding for this center. The committees request that MSU submit a report on the strategic goals of the center, its research plans, and how that research will be practiced to support the center's goals.*

Response: The University agrees to provide the requested report.

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