



PROFESSIONAL STAFF ASSOCIATION  
*THE NJIT CHAPTER OF THE*  
AMERICAN ASSOCIATION OF UNIVERSITY PROFESSORS  
AMERICAN FEDERATION OF TEACHERS – AFL-CIO

**To:** The New Jersey State Senate Budget and Appropriations Committee

**Submitted by:** Amitabha Bose, Professor of Mathematical Sciences, NJIT and  
President of the PSA/AAUP/AFT/AFL-CIO Union

**Subject:** Written Testimony for March 26, 2025 Public Hearing

Dear Senate Budget and Appropriations Committee Members,

I am speaking here today in my capacity as both a Mathematics Faculty member at NJIT since 1996, and since 2022, as the President of the PSA-AAUP-AFT-AFL-CIO, the union that represents over 1,100 full-time Faculty, Lecturers and Professional Staff at NJIT.

In my years at NJIT, I have seen the University grow from a small, primarily teaching focused institute into a powerhouse, R1, nationally recognized university known for producing high quality students and research. NJIT has educated a large number of illustrious graduates, including Chairman Sarlo, who earned both a BS and MS in Civil Engineering here at NJIT. What continues to impress me is the caliber of our diverse student body — their energy, determination, and curiosity elevate the academic environment and directly enhances our capacity to conduct high-impact, applied research. Together with our Faculty, students are an integral part of why NJIT was able to attract over \$175 million in FY24 research funding.

### **Why is NJIT so important for the state of New Jersey?**

The higher education provided by NJIT serves a very specific role in New Jersey:

- 90% of NJIT students major in a STEM discipline; the next closest is Rutgers University at 32%.
- NJIT has educated nearly 1/3 of all New Jersey engineers and scientists.
- Moreover, 62% of all engineering degrees earned by African American and Hispanic students within New Jersey Public Universities were awarded by NJIT. In fact, NJIT is one of the top 20 schools in the country in preparing Black and Hispanic Engineers.
- NJIT educates New Jersey residents. In Fall 2024, of NJIT's domestic undergraduate population of roughly 9,100 students, more than 95% are New Jersey residents.
- NJIT is a catalyst for economic growth, as evidenced by the university's annual economic impact of more than \$2.8 billion on our state. Our New Jersey resident graduates are critical contributors to New Jersey's innovation economy.

### **What is the economic value of an NJIT education?**

An NJIT degree is a tool of social mobility:

- NJIT is ranked 3rd in NJ (and first among N.J. publics) by Payscale for Salary Potential, with early career salaries averaging \$69,200 and mid-career salaries averaging \$129,600 for NJIT students holding a bachelor's degree.
- NJIT graduates have an average mid-career annual salary from \$9,500 to \$49,500 greater than their peers from New Jersey's other four-year public colleges and universities.
- NJIT is ranked #41 by Payscale for College Return on Investment (ROI) with a 20-year net ROI of \$729,000.

- The Wall Street Journal/College Pulse 2025 list of the Best Colleges in the U.S. ranks NJIT No. 26 nationally in Best Salaries, No. 30 in Social Mobility and No. 50 in Best Value.

### **What has made NJIT so successful over the years and what is at risk?**

A combination of good leadership from past and current administrators, highly motivated students, an extremely dedicated and highly talented work force and financial support from State Appropriations have created the necessary setting for NJIT to thrive. Unions such as the PSA have played a critical role as well. As the President of the PSA, I recognize the value, indeed the necessity of having a highly trained and motivated employee base. NJIT functions so well because all of our Administrators, Faculty, Lecturers and Professional Staff are singularly focused on improving student-based and research-based outcomes. We recognize the value of these outcomes in terms of the economic multiplier effect within the state of New Jersey. Unfortunately, in the Governors FY26 Budget Proposal, NJIT stands to see a cut of over \$7.5M from our FY25 Appropriations, a decrease of over 11%. The impact of this will be devastating for NJIT and our ability to conduct high quality research that keeps NJIT in the national conversation and to provide the type of education our students deserve. Moreover, a decrease in state funding will have a negative domino effect on the New Jersey economy. Funding cuts could lead to a loss of jobs, all of which support instruction or research at NJIT. The loss of jobs will weaken the ability of New Jersey residents to pay their bills, to be consumers, or to send their kids to college. In turn this will lead to less vibrant Universities and to a downward spiral. It's critical that we not just maintain but in fact increase State support for our Universities.

### **What does NJIT need in terms of State Appropriations?**

Like all of our public research universities, NJIT requires robust State Appropriations. In particular:

- STEM education is costly, on average about 1.5 times more expensive than educating a non-STEM student. Thus, NJIT needs its full request for Polytechnic aid of \$16.4M
- To provide a continued pathway to student mobility and to recognize NJIT's historical success in educating students, we seek continued levels of funding for Outcome Based Allocations and full funding for the Garden State Guarantee, which is critical for our lower income students and their families.
- To have the employee base to meet our educational and research requirements, NJIT seeks an increase in the FTE cap to 1508.
- State support of \$40M for the Phase I renovation of Tiernan Hall and creation of Sustainable Energy and Environmental Center at Tiernan Hall. Chairman Sarlo, Tiernan Hall, probably looks exactly the same as it did when you graduated, save the renovation of one or two lecture halls or a fresh coat of paint. In its current form, it does not meet our instructional needs and definitely deprives students of an aspect of a high-quality STEM education that they expect at NJIT. Frankly, having out-of-date facilities is bad for NJIT and for New Jersey. We must do better for the students and our collective future. Renovating Tiernan Hall to provide modern equipment for our students is an investment in New Jersey's future workforce. Our graduates will be better placed and better trained to directly enter a myriad of New Jersey industries to support the economic welfare of New Jersey.

Budget Committee Members, NJIT is not just a university — it is an engine of opportunity, innovation, and equity for the state of New Jersey. We prepare students from every socio-economic background for high-demand careers, fuel a growing STEM economy, and produce research that solves real-world problems. But this work is only possible with your support. The proposed \$7.5 million cut to NJIT's FY26 appropriations places all of this at risk — our ability to provide a modern STEM education, to attract top talent, to serve as a national model for upward mobility and to be a key contributor to the success of New Jersey as a whole.

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