

LOBBY | Students encouraged to write letters to Missouri legislators to support Nixon's budget proposal

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show our support of Truman and the Truman experience at the capital," Esfeld said. "Especially, given the governor's proposal, we have something to defend in the capital — something to really fight for."

The day will begin at 6:30 a.m. with a bus ride to Jefferson City. Appointments already are set for the lobbyists to meet and talk with legislators, including members of the Higher Education Committee. The group plans to leave Jefferson City at about 4 p.m.

Senior Leigh Wickell, legislative director for the campaign, monitors bills and legislators at the state level to see how they affect the University.

"We want to show legislators that Truman is the model school with an outstanding student body that sets us apart," Wickell said. "We care about our school, and we are the constituents."

For those who cannot attend "Storm the Capital," Senate members have set up a letter-writing campaign Feb. 3 to 5 and Feb. 9 to 12 in the Student Union Building. Students will have the opportunity to write letters to their legislators about preserving Truman.

"The most important thing to include is the Truman experience, and how it would be affected by the budget cuts," Wickell said. "This will help to explain why they should support level funding for us."

Freshman Emily Hutti and some of her friends participated in the letter-writing campaign.

"I feel it is important because everyone should have the opportunity to go to school," Hutti said. "This could potentially leave some students from being

able to go to school anymore."

Associated Students of the University of Missouri is another organization that lobbies in Jefferson City. This group includes one representative each from University of Missouri-Kansas City, University of Missouri-St. Louis and Missouri University of Science and Technology, and five representatives from University of Missouri-Columbia.

Through ASUM, these representatives are required to lobby at the capital at least two days a week on behalf of student issues. At least two of these campuses are close to the capital, so they have the opportunity to lobby every week.

ASUM also is coordinating with the University of Missouri Higher Education Consortium to have a separate lobby day. The goal for this lobby day will be for representatives from all public schools in Missouri to talk with legislators at the capital. Craig Stevenson, ASUM's Board of Directors chairman, helps approve the policies that the ASUM lobbies for.

"ASUM's main aspects are campus presence and programming and the other aspect is the lobbying organization," Stevenson said. "The real goal is for students to make some connection with the local legislators."

Scott Holste, press secretary to Gov. Nixon, said he only has heard about the lobbyists and has little information about the cause.

"With this being Jay Nixon's first month as governor, we have no expectations to what lobbying will bring, although we look forward to meeting with groups from around the state on a variety of issues during the legislative session in particular and we appreciate the support," Holste said.

"The most important thing to include is the Truman experience, and how it would be affected by the budget cuts."

Leigh Wickell
Senior



Amy Gleaves/Index

Student Senate president senior Lizz Esfeld speaks in the Chariton Room in Missouri Hall Monday night to students interested in participating in a campaign to support Nixon's level funding proposal.

Freshman Funda Dere and junior Nanqing Zeng study federal taxation. They said they often stay in the library until it closes.



Krista Goodman/Index

LIBRARY | Members of the Student Technology Improvement Committee have proposed significant changes to layout and hours of operation

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library should look like. "Our biggest concern that we talked about right now is having a physical space where students can go at anytime to have a place to work and we feel like this plan would have that," Sumter said.

Sophomore Grace Curtright works at Pickler and said she thinks extending the library hours might not affect some students.

"I already work until 1 in the morning," Curtright said. "There's

really not a lot of people here by the time we're closing — usually everybody's gone by midnight — so the only time it would really be helpful is during finals week when everybody is studying for finals."

Sophomore Josh Privitt said he didn't think he would take advantage of a 24-hour library.

"I wouldn't use it because I only work before 5 p.m., but I think it could be helpful for the later hours, definitely, and finals week," he said.

MOHELA | Funding for Pershing Building renovations were put on hold last week after Nixon put the project under indefinite review

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the importance of the Pershing Building project to the University and the state, and remains confident about its completion.

"I'm optimistic that our governor and our legislature will find a way to get this done," Minner said. "We need it on our campus, there's just no two ways about it."

The schools that were approved to continue construction were further along in the construction process. Minner said the Pershing project has moved through the design process as quickly as possible.

"This particular project, assuming it's built, will include a number of very specialized labs for health and exercise science, for the nursing program, a fully functioning clinic for communication disorders — I mean,

planning all of that is not going to be done in a number of weeks," Minner said. "You'll regret it if you do."

Budget director Dave Rector said the University does not have the money to fund this project alone.

"The state appropriation is \$21.5 million, and then we expect to put in somewhere between \$3 and \$4 million of local money with that, so it's in the \$25 million range," Rector said.

Truman has already received nearly \$1 million which has been used for project design.

Rector said that considering the

situation, Truman probably is in the best position it could be at this point.

Renovations could begin within a few months if the funding is there, which makes it an attractive option for possible federal stimulus money. The University has not yet signed a contract for the Pershing Building Project.

"If someone had already broken ground and has construction under way, they're in a bigger mess than we are," Rector said. "I believe Central Mis-

souri's project, they've actually gutted the building already, so they have the building shut down, stripped out, and

then they just had to stop in the middle of everything."

Rector said that in response to the letter, the University has written to the commissioner of higher education and the commissioner of administration, who sent the notice, to outline the Pershing project's importance.

"Our main talking point is that we're so close to going out for bid, we can push it out pretty quick with the go-ahead, and then it becomes one of these economic stimulus sort of deals where we can have some jobs here in Kirksville, help the construction industry and so forth," Rector said.

Whatever happens with funding issues, Rector said Pershing will remain the University's priority, mainly because the design work has already been completed. The next

project on the list is Baldwin, although Truman has also identified a few smaller projects as well, including replacing a boiler in the power plant and upgrading the power infrastructure on campus.

"Baldwin's very big, it's like a \$30 million project," Rector said. "So if they said, 'Hey, we have some economic stimulus money, what could you do with X?' you know we have a couple of smaller projects."

Sophomore Johannah Friel, who has a health class that meets in Pershing, said she thinks that the building needs a makeover.

"It's definitely the oldest building I have classes in," Friel said. "I know the budget's a big deal right now, but I do think that that's one of the buildings that should be renovated soon on campus."

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Johannah Friel
Sophomore

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WITH THE INDEX

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