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York College of Pennsylvania
Joint Hearing of the Pennsylvania Senate and House Urban Affairs Committees
Future of Pennsylvania Cities Large and Small
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Thank you Chairman Argall, Chairman Gillespie, members of the Senate Committee on Urban Affairs and Housing, and members of the House Committee on Urban Affairs. Thank you Senator Waugh and Chairman Gillespie for hosting this joint hearing of the Senate and House Committees on Urban Affairs here at York College of Pennsylvania. We are honored to host such events at the College as a service to the local community and our state representatives.

I am Chad Linder, director of government and community relations at York College. I am here today to discuss the historic relationship between York College and the City of York, and why the College continues to foster this relationship, which has flourished throughout the past two centuries.

To provide perspective to current times, I thought it useful to provide a brief history of our institution. The genesis to what is now York College of Pennsylvania can be traced back several centuries to 1785, when Rev. John Campbell of St. John's Episcopal Church facilitated the construction of a brick and stone building directly across from the church located on North Beaver Street. In 1787, the York Academy was incorporated and began providing parochial education for the residents of York. While the York Academy, in name, ceased operations in 1929, it joined forces with the York Collegiate Institute and continued to serve the community. St. John's Episcopal Church is still located at its founding location and continues to remain a strong parish.

In 1873, the York Collegiate Institute was incorporated and provided college preparatory, commercial and professional studies. The Institute changed directions due to financial constraints by 1941 and began serving as York Junior College, a two-year institution of higher education. By the late 1950s, enrollment had grown to over 500 students, and in 1957, the school's building, located at the corner of Duke Street and College Avenue, was over capacity. In 1957, the College was

offered the opportunity to purchase 57 acres of what was then the Outdoor Country Club; this plot is now the current main campus of the institution.

In 1968, the state granted approval for York Junior College to begin offering four-year baccalaureate degrees, and thus began the era of York College of Pennsylvania. Today, the College enrolls more than 4,600 full-time students, offers nearly 60 majors, three master's programs and one doctoral program. Alumni number over 29,000, and York College has become a destination for those seeking a comprehensive college experience that prepares them for their professional endeavors.

While history is more interesting to some than others, for the purpose of today's hearing, it is particularly relevant. For York College and its predecessors, the City of York has always been essential to the success of the institution. While only about 10 percent of the current campus property falls within city boundaries, the College's relationship with the City remains just as significant. York College and the City of York serve each other well. Each plays a significant role in the success of the other, and through a symbiotic relationship, the College, its students and the City foster each other's growth and vitality.

To state what may be obvious, much of the relationship between York College and the City of York is the result of location. Even though York Junior College relocated in the 1950s, this new location was adjacent to City boundaries. At that time, the institution went from being a "resident" to being a "neighbor." Regardless, College leadership understood and embraced their responsibility to be a "good neighbor," and the relationship extended far beyond geographic proximity.

The Board of Trustees, then composed primarily of local philanthropists, business and community leaders, embraced the ideology that York City represented the core of the York community. They understood that both the economic and cultural strength of downtown York played a significant role in the overall quality of life for both urban and non-urban residents.

These same leaders – internal as well as external visionaries – were also passionate about the College’s mission of providing a quality education. The strategic relocation to the current main campus would provide for decades of enrollment and programmatic growth for the institution, while at the same time allowing the College to remain close to the heart and soul of York City.

In addition to location, York City was also the economic core of the community. For manufacturing, banking, law firms and a host of other professional service providers, downtown was the place to be. For the College, there was importance and value in being within close proximity of such economic activity. With a long history of preparing students for professional careers, the College’s location “close to the action” provided for experiential learning opportunities for students and mutually beneficial relationships for faculty, leadership and staff.

More than 50 years later, much has changed within our community and communities across the nation. I believe that it is safe to assume that most who are present today are well aware of the challenges facing urban centers. Taxes, poverty and the denigration of the traditional family structure are just a few of the current challenges.

At the same time, York College has been fortunate to be able to continue its core mission of providing a quality college education. Fast forward to 2013: The College’s full-time enrollment exceeds 4,600, up from 1,700 in 1975. Students living on campus now exceed 2,500, another significant increase from 1975 levels of around 500. With more than 50 percent of the current student body living on campus and an additional 1,000 students living off campus but within close proximity, new challenges and opportunities have developed.

Before commenting on the current relationship between York College and the City of York, I believe it is important to offer some key points of context. First, York College is a private, not-for-profit institution of higher education. Our primary sources of income are tuition, room and board. We receive minimal direct funding from the state; what we do receive comes primarily from

Institutional Assistance Grants, which represents less than one-quarter of one percent of our annual revenue. Second, the College's mission is to provide a quality education, making available baccalaureate, master's, and more recently, doctoral academic programs. Third, York College's definition of "quality education" includes more than just the transfer of knowledge. The College stresses a holistic approach toward the "college experience" by providing students opportunities that provide experiential learning, social and personal development, and cultural awareness. This framework may help others understand why York College values its relationship with York City and how we best can serve the community.

The College's interaction with York City is fostered through multiple sources from within the College. Administration, faculty and students have all, in one way or another, initiated or participated in activities involving York City. What many find most rewarding is when such collaboration serves multiple purposes, such as supporting the College's mission, providing economic benefit to the City, and fulfilling one's personal passion for community service and commitment to philanthropy. I would like to take this opportunity to highlight just a few examples of this.

The York College Stabler Department of Nursing operates over six Nurse Managed Care Centers in York City. Nursing faculty and students complete over 2,500 patient contacts annually, providing basic and preventative care for underserved city residents. The value of this service exceeds \$400,000, measured by services hours and supply costs. This figure does not include the savings generated by reducing preventable visits to doctors and emergency departments. Not only does this activity support residents of York City, it also provides York College nursing students an opportunity to secure required clinical experience.

With over 90 student clubs and organizations, students have the opportunity to become engaged in community-oriented services in numerous ways. Examples include promotional events for downtown shopping, tutoring local students, and free income tax preparation. These represent just a portion of the more than 20,000 hours of annual volunteer service. Conservatively, these in-kind

activities exceed \$2 million. Again, from the College's perspective, fostering such student activity enhances the student's college experience, academically and socially.

Another example of urban engagement is the York College Community Opportunity Scholarship Program, or YCCOSP. Established in 1989, the Program selects between 10 and 12 applicants from the William Penn High School in the York City School District. Selected students participate in social and academic enrichment, and upon successful high school graduation and admittance into York College, are provided a full tuition, room and board scholarship. The ultimate goal of the Program is to provide underserved youth the opportunity to earn a college degree, as well as mentor those students to become the next generation of community leaders. There are nearly 40 students currently attending York College through this program, which has produced more than 45 graduates. Over \$1 million annually is devoted to YCCOSP by York College.

When discussing our relationship with York City, I would be remiss if I did not extend the College's gratitude for the many ways in which the City supports our institution. Services such as police and fire protection are invaluable when it comes to ensuring the safety of the campus community.

The economic development activities pursued by York Mayor Kim Bracey and her team must also be recognized. Through their efforts to enhance business activity and attract new business, they have provided more opportunities for our students to become engaged in the vibrancy of the downtown area. An increasingly diverse base of establishments provides students with more choices for social interaction and entertainment.

Again, these examples are just a few of the many ways in which both York College and the City of York benefit from a constructive relationship. Perhaps one of the most notable examples of the value of such a relationship is funding the College received under the Redevelopment Capital Assistance Program (RCAP) in 2009. York College received a commitment of \$4 million for the purchase and redevelopment of 26 acres, commonly referred to as the former Schmidt-Ault Paper Company.

Today, this parcel serves as the College's North Campus. In addition to the property acquisition, the College was able to renovate a 26,000-square-foot warehouse into a multiuse facility. Approximately two-thirds of the facility is dedicated to operational functions of the College, allowing for the additional development of academic space on the College's main campus. In addition, nearly 10,000 square feet was allocated and designed to house the College's J. D. Brown Center for Entrepreneurship along with incubator space supported by the Center. Even prior to the facilities completion in 2011, the College was approached by numerous fledgling businesses seeking space. Today, the J. D. Brown Center serves as home for five businesses currently employing over 30 professionals. In addition, dozens of York College students have interned for these clients, providing real-world experience and at least three full-time career opportunities upon graduation.

Another significant outcome of this project is that the College now has 20-plus acres of land to support additional growth and redevelopment in the future.

The awarding of this state grant to the College would not have been possible without the support of our York County legislators. They all should be applauded for recognizing the value of such redevelopment, understanding that such activity is essential to the future of our community. The City of York and the York County Economic Alliance are also invaluable partners committed to the success of this project.

Looking forward, I have a few brief comments about the future of Pennsylvania cities and more particularly, the City of York. Challenges facing many of our state's urban centers are exceptionally complex and daunting. It is with the deepest respect and admiration that I commend Mayor Bracey and her leadership team for their commitment and dedication in serving York City. Like many other communities, York is blessed with countless organizations and individuals committed to the prosperity of their community. Several of those individuals are here with us today. If their passion for this community were the sole factor in ensuring a successful future, the outlook for York City

would be extremely positive. But, as we all know, there are numerous requirements for York City to prosper.

Today you will hear testimony from individuals who are experts in their profession, several whom I know personally. They know what works and what does not. They are also humble enough to acknowledge that sometimes they do not have the answer. It is what you, as elected officials, do with such recommendations that also represents a crucial component that drives urban prosperity.

Pension reform, increased funding for the DCED, revisions to RCAP and tax reform are just a few areas that need attention. Without such reform, the state will continue to bind the hands of those who can get things accomplished.

From the perspective of York College, legislation supporting the role of private, not-for-profit institutions of higher education is most always welcomed. Independent colleges and universities in Pennsylvania enroll over 40 percent of college students and generate nearly 50 percent of degrees awarded, yet these schools receive only 11 percent of higher education funding. York College continues to be a proponent of state higher education funding that follows the student, such as PHEAA.

In addition, the College strongly supports the proposed \$36 million in funding for the Middle Income Student Debt Reduction Act (MISDRA) and the language contained in HB 1213 and SB 420. The income provided to PHEAA would support additional grants to families with an annual income between \$80,000 and \$110,000. Such funding would permit more students access to higher education while reducing their level of student debt.

Thank you for allowing me to share with you details on the value and importance of the relationship between York City and York College of Pennsylvania, as well as some ideas for the funding of higher education. Again, we are honored to host such a relevant and timely discussion here on our campus.