



The Nevada Policy Research Institute

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NPRI comments on Chancellor Rogers' speech

“Chancellor Rogers tonight provided an outstanding example of what happens when Nevada’s public officials choose to engage in finger-pointing at the expense of taking responsibility or offering innovative solutions to our fiscal challenges,” Andy Matthews, Vice President for Communications at the Nevada Policy Research Institute, said of tonight’s speech by Nevada System of Higher Education Chancellor James E. Rogers. NPRI obtained a copy of the speech in advance from the chancellor’s website.

“It is unfortunate that the chancellor chose to lay blame for the challenges facing the Nevada System of Higher Education at the feet of Nevada’s parents and elected officials simply because they refuse to bend to his demands for tax increases,” Matthews continued.

“It is also deeply ironic to hear Chancellor Rogers state that Nevada needs to contribute more to higher education, as reality strongly suggests otherwise. From Fiscal Year 2002 through Fiscal Year 2007, legislative spending on higher education increased by 60 percent, even as student enrollment increased by only 22.9 percent during that same period. Consider also that within the past three years, UNLV President David Ashley purchased a desk and a four-foot peninsula that cost \$15,736.20, in addition to two lounge chairs that cost more than \$3,500. Would foregoing these kinds of lavish expenditures count as some of the cuts that Chancellor Rogers says would destroy children’s hopes for a good education?”

“It is certainly encouraging to hear Chancellor Rogers’ report on efforts by the Board of Regents to identify every potential cost-saving. But Nevadans must insist that the chancellor back up that statement with real action to find and eliminate wasteful spending within the system.

“As Nevada’s business owners and families are making difficult decisions in the face of our collective economic difficulties, they have a right to demand that our public officials do the same, rather than simply pass their problems on to the private sector in the form of new taxes.”

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