

AGENCY NAME:	University of South Carolina Union		
AGENCY CODE:	H400	SECTION:	20H



Fiscal Year 2025-26 Agency Budget Plan

FORM A - BUDGET PLAN SUMMARY

**OPERATING
REQUESTS
(FORM B1)**

For FY 2025-26, my agency is (mark "X"):	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Requesting General Fund Appropriations.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Requesting Federal/Other Authorization.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Not requesting any changes.

**NON-RECURRING
REQUESTS
(FORM B2)**

For FY 2025-26, my agency is (mark "X"):	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Requesting Non-Recurring Appropriations.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Requesting Non-Recurring Federal/Other Authorization.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Not requesting any changes.

**CAPITAL
REQUESTS
(FORM C)**

For FY 2025-26, my agency is (mark "X"):	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Requesting funding for Capital Projects.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Not requesting any changes.

**PROVISOS
(FORM D)**

For FY 2025-26, my agency is (mark "X"):	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Requesting a new proviso and/or substantive changes to existing provisos.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Only requesting technical proviso changes (such as date references).
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Not requesting any proviso changes.

Please identify your agency's preferred contacts for this year's budget process.

	<u>Name</u>	<u>Phone</u>	<u>Email</u>
PRIMARY CONTACT:	Kelly Epting	803-777-8411	eptingk@mailbox.sc.edu
SECONDARY CONTACT:	Kevin Russell	803-777-0781	russelkr@mailbox.sc.edu

I have reviewed and approved the enclosed FY 2025-26 Agency Budget Plan, which is complete and accurate to the extent of my knowledge.

	<u>Agency Director</u>	<u>Board or Commission Chair</u>
SIGN/DATE:	<i>Michael Amiridis 8/26/24</i>	<i>Thad H. Westbrook 9/24/24</i>
TYPE/PRINT NAME:	Michael Amiridis	Thad H. Westbrook

This form must be signed by the agency head – not a delegate.

Agency Name:	USC - Union Campus
Agency Code:	H400
Section:	20H

BUDGET REQUESTS			FUNDING					FTES				
Priority	Request Type	Request Title	State	Federal	Earmarked	Restricted	Total	State	Federal	Earmarked	Restricted	Total
1	B1 - Recurring	Tuition Mitigation	362,000	0	0	0	362,000	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
2	C - Capital	USC Union Campus Life Cycle Maintenance: Critical Care & Repair	7,450,000	0	0	0	7,450,000	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
3	C - Capital	Civic Center/Gymnasium	11,000,000	0	0	0	11,000,000	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
TOTALS			18,812,000	0	0	0	18,812,000	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00

Agency Name:	USC - Union Campus		
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FORM B1 – RECURRING OPERATING REQUEST

AGENCY PRIORITY	1
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Provide the Agency Priority Ranking from the Executive Summary.

TITLE	Tuition Mitigation
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Provide a brief, descriptive title for this request.

AMOUNT	General: \$362,000 Federal: \$0 Other: \$0 Total: \$362,000
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What is the net change in requested appropriations for FY 2025-2026? This amount should correspond to the total for all funding sources on the Executive Summary.

NEW POSITIONS	0.00
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Please provide the total number of new positions needed for this request.

FACTORS ASSOCIATED WITH THE REQUEST	Mark "X" for all that apply:	
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Change in cost of providing current services to existing program audience
	<input type="checkbox"/>	Change in case load/enrollment under existing program guidelines
	<input type="checkbox"/>	Non-mandated change in eligibility/enrollment for existing program
	<input type="checkbox"/>	Non-mandated program change in service levels or areas
	<input type="checkbox"/>	Proposed establishment of a new program or initiative
	<input type="checkbox"/>	Loss of federal or other external financial support for existing program
	<input type="checkbox"/>	Exhaustion of fund balances previously used to support program
	<input type="checkbox"/>	IT Technology/Security related
	<input type="checkbox"/>	HR/Personnel Related
<input type="checkbox"/>	Consulted DTO during development	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Related to a Non-Recurring request – If so, Priority #	

STATEWIDE ENTERPRISE STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES	Mark "X" for primary applicable Statewide Enterprise Strategic Objective:	
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Education, Training, and Human Development
	<input type="checkbox"/>	Healthy and Safe Families
	<input type="checkbox"/>	Maintaining Safety, Integrity, and Security
	<input type="checkbox"/>	Public Infrastructure and Economic Development
<input type="checkbox"/>	Government and Citizens	

ACCOUNTABILITY OF FUNDS	<p>This proposed request is consistent the Statewide Enterprise Strategic Objective.</p> <p><u>Objective 1:</u> Education, Training and Human Development - Improve educational infrastructure to elevate the levels of educational preparedness of every South Carolinian to lead a healthy and productive life, including success in a job or career and in the community.</p>
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What specific strategy, as outlined in the most recent Strategic Planning and Performance Measurement template of agency's accountability report, does this funding request support? How would this request advance that strategy? How would the use of these funds be evaluated?

RECIPIENTS OF	Students, Faculty, and Staff of USC Union.
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FUNDS

What individuals or entities would receive these funds (contractors, vendors, grantees, individual beneficiaries, etc.)? How would these funds be allocated – using an existing formula, through a competitive process, based upon predetermined eligibility criteria?

JUSTIFICATION OF REQUEST

- These funds would enable the System 1) to offset the tremendous rise in current inflationary costs expected to remain higher than historic norms for the foreseeable future, 2) to cover the customarily unfunded portion of state funding requirements for pension, health insurance, and cost of living adjustments, and 3) to continue to make strategic investments improving access to higher education for students across South Carolina.
- Recurring funding would be used to support and maintain expanding facilities and offset ever increasing costs of services, supplies, and utilities. Over the past 4 years, the campus has been fortunate to be the recipient of generous capital improvement funds that have expanded and enhanced the USC Union facilities. In an effort to maintain and service the facilities at their new refurbished levels, the campus needs additional operational funds for utilities, custodial support and supplies, as well as daily and routine maintenance supplies.
- Recurring funding would be used to support expenses for 3 FTE faculty or staff salaries and fringe, in an effort to meet the growing instructional and student service needs of the student body. This would also allow the campus to provide instruction by more full-time faculty and rely less on part-time adjunct faculty.

Requests would help mitigate future tuition increases by covering anticipated operating increases for inflationary costs and mandated increases such as pension, health insurance, and cost of living adjustments.

Please thoroughly explain the request to include the justification for funds, potential offsets, matching funds, and method of calculation. Please include any explanation of impact if funds are not received. If new positions have been requested, explain why existing vacancies are not sufficient.

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FORM C – CAPITAL REQUEST

AGENCY PRIORITY	2
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Provide the Agency Priority Ranking from the Executive Summary.

TITLE	USC Union Campus Life Cycle Maintenance: Critical Care & Repair
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Provide a brief, descriptive title for this request.

AMOUNT	\$7,450,000
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How much is requested for this project in FY FY 2025-2026? This amount should correspond to the total for all funding sources on the Executive Summary.

CPIP PRIORITY	This request is made to fund the life cycle maintenance items in order to provide a safe and productive learning environment on campus. Non-funding jeopardizes the campus' ability to meet the needs of the students, faculty and staff as well as the further degradation of plant and facilities. Life cycle maintenance needs have not been included in the CPIP.
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Identify the project's CPIP plan year and priority number, along with the first year in which the project was included in the agency's CPIP. If not included in the agency's CPIP, please provide an explanation. If the project involves a request for appropriated state funding, briefly describe the agency's contingency plan in the event that state funding is not made available in the amount requested.

OTHER APPROVALS	Approvals through the system have been deemed appropriate for the level of expenditures.
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What approvals have already been obtained? Are there additional approvals that must be secured in order for the project to succeed? (Institutional board, JBRC, SFAA, etc.)

LONG-TERM PLANNING AND SUSTAINABILITY	<p>The life cycle maintenance items listed on this form have not been funded or included on the CPIP to date. However, they will continue to be presented for consideration and/or written into upcoming CPIP as priorities dictate.</p> <p>Improvements listed herein will have tremendous impact on the campus' ability to deliver its mission and have a useful life of up to 20+ years. Once renovations are complete, the campus will maintain the buildings with existing maintenance and operations funding.</p>
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What other funds have already been invested in this project (source/type, amount, timeframe)? Will other capital and/or operating funds for this project be requested in the future? If so, how much, and in which fiscal years? Has a source for those funds been identified/secured? What is the agency's expectation with regard to additional annual costs or savings associated with this capital improvement? What source of funds will be impacted by those costs or savings? What is the expected useful life of the capital improvement?

	<p>This funding would allow the campus to address critical care and repairs to keep the current facilities operational and safe. Providing a safe and well-maintained learning environment is critical for the institution to deliver its mission and aid in the recruitment and retention of students. Funding would support critical care and maintenance for all campus buildings to support Instruction, Academic Support, Student Services, Institutional Support, Physical Plant and Athletics. Projects would include but are not limited to the list below. Revisions to this list may need to be made to meet the most critical and urgent maintenance needs of the campus at the time of funding.</p> <p>Rippy Building (Science & Nursing): Complete redo, complete exterior removal, structural upgrades, new windows & doors, HVAC, carpet, painting, lighting, build a unisex ADA restroom on first floor, build out office spaces - \$2,000,000</p> <p>Auditorium Upgrades: Lighting, sound, curtains, stage - \$200,000</p>
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SUMMARY

Parking Lots: Across campus to resurface and restripe - \$200,000

Furniture Upgrades: Across campus remove old desk and chairs - \$250,000

Across campus exterior painting on all buildings - \$150,000

USC Union Laurens Location: Phase II : Classroom upfit, HVAC repairs, IT, Fire Safety, windows, Student Lounge, Student Success Center, offices - \$2,000,000

Signage: Interior & exterior on both campuses - \$100,000

Soccer Field : Field grading, irrigation, mower shed - \$1,500,000

Central Building Elevator: \$150,000

Softball Field House: \$400,000

Baseball Field House: \$400,000

Jonesville Gym exterior doors/panels upgrades: \$100,000

Provide a summary of the project and explain why it is necessary. Please refer to the budget guidelines for appropriate questions and thoroughly answer all related items.

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FORM C – CAPITAL REQUEST

AGENCY PRIORITY	3
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Provide the Agency Priority Ranking from the Executive Summary.

TITLE	Civic Center/Gymnasium
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Provide a brief, descriptive title for this request.

AMOUNT	\$11,000,000
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How much is requested for this project in FY FY 2025-2026? This amount should correspond to the total for all funding sources on the Executive Summary.

CPIP PRIORITY	The Civic Center/Gymnasium will be included in FY26 CPIP form. In the event that sufficient funding is not secured, the Civic Center/Gymnasium project will be placed on hold.
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Identify the project's CPIP plan year and priority number, along with the first year in which the project was included in the agency's CPIP. If not included in the agency's CPIP, please provide an explanation. If the project involves a request for appropriated state funding, briefly describe the agency's contingency plan in the event that state funding is not made available in the amount requested.

OTHER APPROVALS	Approvals through the system have been deemed appropriate for the level of expenditures.
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What approvals have already been obtained? Are there additional approvals that must be secured in order for the project to succeed? (Institutional board, JBRC, SFAA, etc.)

LONG-TERM PLANNING AND SUSTAINABILITY	At present, no funds have been invested in the Civic Center/Gymnasium project. Additional capital project funding will be requested in 2-5 years for a weight room, locker room, additional offices, and additional parking, etc. The additional parking will benefit the revitalization efforts for USC Union by adding additional parking for Main Street. Additional operating funds will be requested for 2 FTE positions for Welcome Center administrative assistant and daily maintenance support. Additional costs include \$15,500 for utilities, \$2,500 for professional cleaning services, \$5,000 annually for general upkeep and repairs. The center should generate sufficient revenue to support itself through rental income. The anticipated expected useful life of this capital project is 50 years.
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What other funds have already been invested in this project (source/type, amount, timeframe)? Will other capital and/or operating funds for this project be requested in the future? If so, how much, and in which fiscal years? Has a source for those funds been identified/secured? What is the agency's expectation with regard to additional annual costs or savings associated with this capital improvement? What source of funds will be impacted by those costs or savings? What is the expected useful life of the capital improvement?

LONG-TERM PLANNING AND SUSTAINABILITY	A compliant gymnasium/convocation center will support the university in bringing back men and women's basketball and provide a proper seating capacity for our current volleyball team and student activities. At present, Union County has no civic center to support events like graduations, sporting events, or concerts/musical performances. This event space can also be offered to the community for large gatherings seating up to 1,500 people. Youth programs could also use this space for camps and activities. This will also be the front door and Welcome Center to USC Union to engage prospective new students /student athletes and parents. This facility will serve as a central location for our athletic program housing coaches office, a wellness center and locker rooms. This will be a 2 or 3 phase project with the gym building as a start and phase into locker rooms and offices.
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SUMMARY

Provide a summary of the project and explain why it is necessary. Please refer to the budget guidelines for appropriate questions and thoroughly answer all related items.

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FORM E – AGENCY COST SAVINGS AND GENERAL FUND REDUCTION CONTINGENCY PLAN

TITLE	Agency Cost Savings and General Fund Reduction Contingency Plan
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AMOUNT	\$185,790
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What is the General Fund 3% reduction amount? This amount should correspond to the reduction spreadsheet prepared by EBO.

ASSOCIATED FTE REDUCTIONS	0
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How many FTEs would be reduced in association with this General Fund reduction?

PROGRAM / ACTIVITY IMPACT	<p>Instruction, Academic Support, Student Services, Institutional Support, and Operation of Maintenance and Plant would be impacted.</p> <p>To accomplish a 3% reduction in general funds, USC Union would need to reduce part-time temporary personnel and fringe. In many instances, these positions are held by student employees that are relying on the income to assist with college expenses. In addition, these students are learning valuable workplace skills as well as providing a much need service to the institution.</p> <p>The Union campus relies heavily on adjunct faculty to teach courses. Each campus would evaluate where they could reduce the use of adjunct faculty and may need to utilize course overloads for FTE faculty.</p> <p>A reduction would decrease available manpower for maintenance needs and general physical plant upkeep.</p> <p>Part-time temporary staff in other areas would also be impacted. These include the Business Office, Student Affairs, Academic Affairs, and Academic Student Success Center. A reduction in these areas would lessen the number of services provided to our students and increase the workload on existing FTE staff.</p>
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What programs or activities are supported by the General Funds identified?

SUMMARY	<p>USC Union’s primary mission of providing instructional services to students would be impacted. Both Academic and Service units are funded from the Campus’ general fund which is comprised almost exclusively from State general fund, student tuition and fee revenue.</p> <p>The calculation is based on 3% of FY24 General Appropriations of \$6,193,013.</p>
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Please provide a detailed summary of service delivery impact caused by a reduction in General Fund Appropriations and provide the method of calculation for anticipated reductions. Agencies should prioritize reduction in expenditures that have the least significant impact on service delivery.

AGENCY COST SAVINGS PLANS

As a matter of practice, USC Union and the other Palmetto College campuses have reorganized personnel and reduced salary and fringe costs when positions become open to improve business processes, cut costs and become more efficient. USC Union continues to evaluate opportunities in order to eliminate duplication.

Proposed and realized savings will be repurposed into the overall mission of the campus with the goal of improving accessibility, affordability and the academic opportunities for students, student success while enhancing student activities.

What measures does the agency plan to implement to reduce its costs and operating expenses by more than \$50,000? Provide a summary of the measures taken and the estimated amount of savings. How does the agency plan to repurpose the savings?

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FORM F – REDUCING COST AND BURDEN TO BUSINESSES AND CITIZENS

TITLE	Reducing Cost and Burden to Businesses and Citizens – University of South Carolina Palmetto College
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Provide a brief, descriptive title for this request.

EXPECTED SAVINGS TO BUSINESSES AND CITIZENS	The University has implemented programs and taken steps over the last several years designed to assist students in obtaining a degree in a timely manner and to minimize the overall cost of obtaining a quality education. Providing a quality workforce to the businesses within the State is a vital aspect of continuous economic development. The savings to citizens and business of the state are incalculable. The economic impact of the University on the State of South Carolina is significant, and highlights are provided further below.
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What is the expected savings to South Carolina's businesses and citizens that is generated by this proposal? The savings could be related to time or money.

FACTORS ASSOCIATED WITH THE REQUEST	Mark "X" for all that apply:
	<input type="checkbox"/> Repeal or revision of regulations.
	<input type="checkbox"/> Reduction of agency fees or fines to businesses or citizens.
	<input type="checkbox"/> Greater efficiency in agency services or reduction in compliance burden.
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other

METHOD OF CALCULATION	<p>Highlights of a recent study found that USC:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Has a total economic impact (all 8 campuses statewide) of approximately \$5.5 billion when measured in terms of annual state output. • Supports over 60,000 job statewide. • Returns \$219 million annually to the state in tax revenue. <p>Other findings and the complete study can be found at: http://southcarolina.edu/docum...</p>
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Describe the method of calculation for determining the expected cost or time savings to businesses or citizens.

REDUCTION OF FEES OR FINES	The only published State of South Carolina regulations USC has, are those contained in Chapter 119 dealing with motor vehicle registration, parking, obeying traffic signs and adhering to posted speed limits while on campus. These regulations were promulgated under the authority of Section 59-117-40 of the S.C. Code of Laws. All tuition, fees and fines are reviewed annually before being presented to the Board of Trustees for their consideration and approval. These tuition and fees are contained in the annual budget and are related to providing instructional services to enrolled students. There are a few fines contained in that schedule which all relate to parking.
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Which fees or fines does the agency intend to reduce? What was the fine or fee revenue for the previous fiscal year? What was the associated program expenditure for the previous fiscal year? What is the enabling authority for the issuance of the fee or fine?

REDUCTION OF REGULATION	The University's regulations do not pertain to business operations. Nor do they pertain to the citizens of the State in general. The University has taken steps over the last several years to assist students in obtaining a degree in a timely manner and to minimize the overall cost of obtaining a quality education. See summarized highlights below.
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Which regulations does the agency intend to amend or delete? What is the enabling authority for the regulation?

	<p>The University of South Carolina – UNION is one of the 4 Regional Palmetto College campuses and participates in the Palmetto College Online programs. Palmetto College Online was designed to make Bachelor's completion degrees more accessible and affordable for in-state place bound residents. The number of programs available through Palmetto College continues to grow each year thereby reducing the need for residents to choose the more expensive "for-profit" online college. Centralizing distance learning efforts for the USC System helps contain costs associated with program startup, marketing and admissions. Over 1,200 students have graduated from Palmetto College Online and nearly 1,400 are currently enrolled.</p> <p>Palmetto College applied for and received nearly \$1 million from the United States Department of Agriculture – Rural Utilities Services grants to update and enhance its distance learning network. The funding has allowed Palmetto College to modernize, enhance, and improve its distance learning network to deliver Palmetto College distance</p>
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education courses with better quality and more reliability. By improving the technology through the use of federal grant funds, Palmetto College can reach more students while lessening the financial burden on the citizens of South Carolina.

SUMMARY

Provide an explanation of the proposal and its positive results on businesses or citizens. How will the request affect agency operations?

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FORM H – TUITION MITIGATION (PROVISO 117.187)

TITLE	Tuition Mitigation Proviso 117.187
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AMOUNT	\$362,000
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What is the amount needed for Tuition Mitigation for FY26? This amount should correspond to the priority 1 recurring budget request. Tuition Mitigation should ONLY include the state funding necessary to continue existing operations on July 1, 2025, with no in-state undergraduate tuition or mandatory fee increases. Tuition Mitigation should not include any new programs or expansion of existing academic programs that may be contemplated for Fiscal Year 2025-26.

EXPLANATION OF METHODOLOGY	<p>The top budget priority for the University of South Carolina Union, which is to continue partnering with the state to invest in funding that mitigates annual resident tuition increases, reflects the growing need to make higher education more affordable and accessible. By working with the state to invest in this area, the goal is to minimize the burden on students and families while still maintaining the quality of education and services.</p> <p>The Higher Education Price Index (HEPI) is indeed a valuable tool for measuring inflation specific to the costs that higher education institutions face. When applied to both state appropriations and tuition revenues, USC Union's continued experience of lost purchasing power suggests that even with adjustments for inflation, the institution is unable to keep up with rising costs. Factors such as faculty salaries, utilities, supplies, and other operational costs are rising faster than the revenues adjusted by HEPI. As a result, despite efforts to increase funding or mitigate tuition increases, the institution's purchasing power continues to erode, which can put a strain on maintaining or expanding services and programs.</p> <p>Projected FY25 Exp \$10.64M x HEPI 3.4% = \$362K</p>																															
	<p align="center">4% Fee Waiver Information: USC Union</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th rowspan="2">Fiscal Year</th> <th colspan="2">Total</th> <th colspan="2">Resident</th> <th colspan="2">NonResident</th> </tr> <tr> <th># Students</th> <th>Amount</th> <th># Students</th> <th>Amount</th> <th># Students</th> <th>Amount</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>2024</td> <td>60</td> <td>56,812.75</td> <td>58</td> <td>55,612.75</td> <td>2</td> <td>1,200.00</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th colspan="3">Summary Data for Non-Resident Abatements by Campus</th> </tr> <tr> <th colspan="3">Academic Year 2023-2024 (Fall 23, Spring 24, & Summer 24)</th> </tr> <tr> <th>Campus</th> <th># of Students</th> <th>Amount</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>USC Union</td> <td>46</td> <td>491,725</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>FY25 Resident required tuition and fees \$3,779 per semester.</p> <p>Fall 2024 preliminary percentage of in-state, undergraduate students are 93%.</p>	Fiscal Year	Total		Resident		NonResident		# Students	Amount	# Students	Amount	# Students	Amount	2024	60	56,812.75	58	55,612.75	2	1,200.00	Summary Data for Non-Resident Abatements by Campus			Academic Year 2023-2024 (Fall 23, Spring 24, & Summer 24)			Campus	# of Students	Amount	USC Union	46
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USC Union	46	491,725																														

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Please provide a detailed explanation of the methods used to estimate the FY26 tuition mitigation needs. What standard inflation factor is being used (HEPI, CPI, etc.)? What base budget items is the inflation factor applied to? What is the impact of tuition waivers and abatements, including the amount of foregone revenue, and its impact on the need for additional state funding.

COST SAVINGS	<p>In FY23, USC Union's Whitener Central Building underwent a major renovation, resulting in significant improvements. Key upgrades included replacing the outdated chiller/boiler system with a more economical, VRV System (variable refrigerant volume system) which is an individual room climate-controlled system and installing energy-efficient LED lighting throughout the building. These changes have led to an estimated annual savings of \$8,000 in utility costs.</p> <p>USC Union has also taken steps to reduce costs by combining roles. In 2022, the Dean's Assistant position was merged with the Human Resources Manager position, saving the university an average of \$29,000 per year. Similarly, in 2024, USC Union merged the Academic Success Center position with the Student Activities Coordinator position, resulting in an additional annual savings of approximately \$32,000. These consolidations reflect the institution's efforts to optimize resources while maintaining strong support services for students.</p> <p>Annually USC Union partners with Union County and Laurens County Future Scholarships to award students' funds. If students are recipients of the LIFE Scholarships and recent a recent graduate, Union County will pay the remaining balance of tuition and fees. This averages an annual savings for student of \$40,000. Laurens County offers a similar award. If a Laurens County student graduates a local high school and is LIFE Scholarship eligible or Lottery Tuition Assistance Program eligible, LCFS will cover their tuition. The averages an annual saving for students of \$10,000.</p> <p>The University of South Carolina Union remains committed to making sound budgeting decisions and operating efficiently to ensure the continued provision of a quality education for its students, despite financial challenges. This approach underscores USC Union's dedication to maintaining academic excellence and institutional sustainability amid rising inflation and other economic pressures.</p> <p>In FY23, USC Union's Whitener Central Building underwent a major renovation, resulting in significant improvements. Key upgrades included replacing the outdated chiller/boiler system with a more economical, VRV System (variable refrigerant volume system) which is an individual room climate-controlled system and installing energy-efficient LED lighting throughout the building. These changes have led to an estimated annual savings of \$8,000 in utility costs.</p> <p>USC Union has also taken steps to reduce costs by combining roles. In 2022, the Dean's Assistant position was merged with the Human Resources Manager position, saving the university an average of \$29,000 per year. Similarly, in 2024, USC Union merged the Academic Success Center position with the Student Activities Coordinator position, resulting in an additional annual savings of approximately \$32,000. These consolidations reflect the institution's efforts to optimize resources while maintaining strong support services for students.</p>
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These funds were used to mitigate the impact of rising costs in various areas, including labor, goods, utilities, and services. Labor costs have increased due to competitive wages and market demand for skilled employees. Additionally, the cost of goods, including supplies and materials, has risen due to inflation and supply chain issues. The cost of utilities—such as electricity, water, and gas—has been steadily increasing. The funds were used to absorb these growing expenses.

Provide a detailed analysis of any cost savings measures taken since FY19 to offset undergraduate tuition and fee increases and attach quantifiable documentation. Please include documentation of actions taken by the board of trustees or board of visitors or by administration. Attach any cost savings studies that have been undertaken and provide an explanation of actions taken to implement these studies. Provide future quantifiable cost savings plans and expectations for implementation.

LOW ENROLLMENT

Since 2019, USC Union has experienced an increase in the number of associate degrees awarded, signaling a positive trend in academic achievement. During the academic years 2021-22 and 2022-23, USC Union introduced various initiatives and services aimed at expanding access, affordability, and student support. These efforts continue to evolve and are aligned with the objectives outlined in the Statewide Education and Workforce Development Act of 2023. As a result of these initiatives, USC Union’s Student Success Rate rose from 57.5% to 73.3%, and the Graduation Rate increased from 27.4% to 31.3% compared to the previous year.

In Spring 2024, USC Union, in collaboration with USC Upstate and the Union County School District (UCSD), launched the ****Union County Fast-Track to Teaching initiative****. This initiative provides a direct educational pathway for UCSD students to earn a bachelor’s degree in early childhood, elementary, or middle-level education, addressing local workforce needs in education.

The USC Union Nursing Program operates in partnership with USC Aiken and is approved by the South Carolina State Board of Nursing. Additionally, it holds full accreditation from the Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education (CCNE), ensuring that the curriculum and training meet the highest educational standards. In Summer 2023, USC Union graduated 6 nursing students, all of whom achieved a 100% passing rate on the NCLEX exam. In Summer 2024, this success continued, with 9 graduates also achieving a 100% NCLEX passing rate. These achievements reflect the strength and quality of USC Union’s Nursing Program.

At present, USC Union has not identified any academic programs as unhealthy, indicating overall program stability and success. USC Union will continue to monitor all programs.

Provide a list of any undergraduate programs, academic or other, that have been reduced or eliminated since FY19. Please document the reasons for the reduction or elimination. If the institution has, or is expected to have, a decline in in-state undergraduate student enrollment, provide analysis on how the institution will ensure the corresponding reduction in tuition will not lead to requests for additional state funding.

AGENCY NAME:	University of South Carolina Union		
AGENCY CODE:	H400	SECTION:	20H

UNOBLIGATED FUND BALANCE	<p>State--\$0.00; Federal-\$0.00; Other- \$1,405,038 Institutional Breakdown: Academic & Operational- \$1,351,272; Auxiliary-\$53,766</p> <p>Operating reserves represent about 14.25% of the annual operating budget, with a future goal of 25%. To maintain a sound fiscal position the campus believes it is imperative to carry a balance that is sufficient to cover emergencies, catastrophic losses, or critical need expenses; as well as provide funding for one-time initiatives to enhance instructional programs and aid in student recruitment and retention. In recent years the campus has benefited from state appropriated deferred maintenance funds which have greatly improved the structural integrity and appearance of the physical plant. Operating reserves provide additional means for maintaining these renovated facilities at an improved level.</p>
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Provide the institution's unobligated fund balance for the most recently completed fiscal year. Attach documentation showing this balance disaggregated to identify amounts that are restricted in their use by external authorities (General Assembly, Federal Government, donors, etc.) and those that are not subject to such restrictions. Provide an explanation of the amount the institution considers to be an appropriate unrestricted fund balance as a percentage of its operating budget and the percentage of the institution's operating budget that the fund balance represents.