Statement on Governor Jan Brewer's Proposed Budget
June 2, 2009

I commend Governor Jan Brewer for her wisdom and courage in proposing a state budget that both deals with the current budget deficit and ensures Arizona's economic future. If Arizona is to return to prosperity in the near future, the state's universities must continue to train workers, attract research funding, develop new industries and spin off start-up companies. Indeed, the state's research universities are the key to the kind of economic diversification that will moderate future economic downturns in the state.

While the governor's budget includes tens of millions of dollars of cuts for the three state universities – on top of the hundreds of millions in cuts we have already taken – those cuts are substantially less than the total cuts in the proposed legislative budget, which includes an additional $90 million in university auxiliary fund sweeps. These funds include payments students have made for self-supporting services such as the book store, residence halls and cafeterias. Since these are not state-appropriated dollars, we do not believe auxiliary fund sweeps are even legal. Adding the fund sweeps to the other cuts proposed in the legislative budget would cripple the university system's capability of serving the people of the State of Arizona.

Finally, the governor's budget restores the SPEED package, funding to perform badly needed building renovation and construction at all three state universities. This program will not only extend the lives of publicly owned buildings on our campuses but will also put people back to work and increase private sector spending.

Although there will be strong opposition to the governor's proposed budget by some elected officials, the people of the state are behind her proposal. A poll by one of the state's most respected pollster has shown that the majority of Arizona residents– 60% – would rather see revenue enhancements than additional severe cuts to education.

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Start helping ASU make the case for Arizona State University and higher education today. Please contact your legislators (http://www.sundeviladvocates.org/advocacytips.html) today to let them know you support Governor Jan Brewer's proposed Fiscal Year 2010 budget as a proud ASU alumnus.