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Research Study Verifies Growing Economic Impact of Higher Education

PIERRE, S.D. – A research study that measures the impact of South Dakota’s six public universities on the state economy will be released Tuesday, Jan. 31, at a briefing for state lawmakers in Pierre.

“This study updates initial baseline research conducted in 2010,” said Randy Schaefer, president of the South Dakota Board of Regents. “We were amazed to learn that the statewide impact of the public higher education system on South Dakota’s economic growth and well-being has grown by 35 percent in six years.”

Both the newest study and the one from 2010 were conducted by lead researcher Michael Allgrunn, associate professor of economics at the University of South Dakota’s Beacom School of Business. The research work was sponsored by the South Dakota Board of Regents and the South Dakota Chamber of Commerce & Industry.

Among other findings, Allgrunn’s research found that 67,850 people living in South Dakota would not be here without the six public universities. This includes students; faculty and staff employed by the universities and their families; as well as other workers and their families not affiliated directly with the universities, but who make a living here due to the economic activity that the universities generate. Additional data will be released Tuesday when the full research study becomes public.

“The economic impact of our public universities is quite significant; we think many people will be surprised at just how significant,” Schaefer said.

Tuesday’s briefing includes remarks from Dr. Allgrunn; Mike Rush, executive director of the South Dakota Board of Regents; and David Owen, president of South Dakota Chamber of Commerce & Industry. The public and news media are invited and encouraged to attend.

- The **Pierre** briefing begins at 3 p.m. (Central Time), or immediately after the legislative session adjourns if later than 3 p.m., in Room 414 of the South Dakota Capitol Building, 500 E. Capitol Ave.
- The briefing (audio only) will be available by livestream through The South Dakota Network, powered by South Dakota Public Broadcasting, at <http://www.sd.net/room414/>.