LAWRENCE (AP) — The Kansas Board of Regents wants Gov. Kathleen Sebelius to submit a $47.7 million budget amendment as a down payment on repairs to state universities.

The action comes as the House Appropriations Committee started work Tuesday on the final state budget and as available revenue shrinks because of tax cuts, natural disasters and a costly settlement with the federal government for Medicaid expenses. The Senate Ways and Means Committee will start its work Wednesday.

"As you know, this is an issue that only becomes more expensive and more dangerous the longer it is ignored," Reggie, the regents' chief executive officer, said in a letter to Sebelius about the repairs at universities.

The regents have been lobbying lawmakers to address the backlog of $663 million worth of deferred maintenance and repair projects. But lawmakers have failed to come up with any solution.

Budget experts met Monday to review state revenue and emerged announcing that the economy is in good shape but many critical areas — taking care of social-service waiting lists and fixing crumbling classrooms at universities — may get shortchanged.

In his letter to Sebelius, Robinson said the proposed $47.7 million would pay for the top needs at each regents school. That would include $8.8 million at the University of Kansas to repair and replace deteriorating utility tunnels and $7.9 million at the University of Kansas Medical Center for repairs at the Applegate Energy Center.
that life on a university campus, usually a sprawling, scenic complex intended as an idyllic retreat for scholarship, can change instantly.

"It's always happened in high schools, never colleges," said John Leeker, a freshman at Newman University.

"Everybody was talking — how many were killed? Why it happened? What caused it? Why do it?" he said.

All day, even as they tried to learn some of those answers, Kansas universities began reviewing their own security procedures with a sense of dread.

"You have procedures in place, but nothing — nothing — can prepare you from something as horrific as what's being experienced at Virginia Tech," said Pat Bosco, dean of student life at Kansas State University.

Colleges are difficult to secure, officials said. The University of Kansas covers 1,000 acres, some of it wooded. Up to 35,000 people come onto it every day, said Todd Cohen, a KU spokesman.

"How do you lock down a campus?" Cohen said. "You have 5,000 people living on campus, 10,000 employees, and people coming onto the campus all day. You can't just shut the door."

Beggs said WSU would hold meetings among administrators and campus police to review its safety.

"The truth is, I think everyone can do a lot more to further public safety mainly by just being aware of everyone around you, and being sensitive to whether something is bubbling up in someone near you," Beggs said.

At Wichita State

WSU students had different opinions about how safe they are. Rose Dellard, a WSU graduate student, said campus security needs to be increased.

"If you have classes at night, especially at the west campus when it was on Central before it moved, they wouldn't escort people," Dellard said. "If you didn't hook up with people, you think, 'I hope I make it to my car.'"

But Brandon Hoffman, a Shocker freshman, said the shooting in Virginia was an isolated incident.

"I feel WSU is safe," Hoffman said. "I don't think anyone is thinking about that happening."

The university already has banned all guns from the campus, even for those permitted to carry concealed firearms under a new state law.

The policy was a direct response to the law, said Ron Kopita, WSU's vice president for campus life and university relations. The only people permitted to carry firearms on campus now are police officers.

Kopita was asked whether permitting authorized civilians to carry concealed firearms might have allowed someone to stop the Virginia shooter.

"It is our view that guns with guns just escalates violence rather than de-escalates it," Kopita said.

At Friends

Friends University has a policy to deal with a shooter on campus, said Richard Vinroe, the school's director of security.

A group of people from the physical plant, security department and maintenance crew train every year in that scenario. It's part of a larger plan to deal as well with severe weather emergencies, he said. Student residence hall leaders also participate in the training.

If someone begins shooting at Friends, the staff is prepared to
cordon off the facility where the shooting is taking place and lock down all other buildings, Vinroe said.

“If we didn’t have a gunman identified, if he’s not in custody or contained in some way, our policy would be to continue to lock down all of our buildings, and turn away students coming onto our campus until we knew absolutely we were secure,” Vinroe said.

Some of the group at Friends met Monday to discuss the Virginia Tech shootings and determine whether to change their procedures, Vinroe said.

Meetings were the order of the day at many of the state’s universities. Some concerned the emotional effect on their students.

At Kansas State

Bosco met with campus ministers and counselors to talk about how to respond to students and families.

“Any time you have an incident like this, it resonates throughout our student body,” Bosco said.

K-State also is likely to have a program in the middle of the week for students most affected by the shootings in Virginia, Bosco said.

Students were shaken on Monday, he said.

“We have increased our resources on campus for safety in so many ways — residence halls, the stadium, major events like the Landon lectures,” he said. “But you can’t lock up buildings.”

At Kansas State

KU chancellor Robert Hemenway, in a statement released by the university, said of the Virginia Tech shooting, “It is a chilling reminder why campus security must always be a top priority. The safety of our students, faculty, staff and visitors is paramount.”

KU focuses on several layers of deterrence, Cohen said. It has a 24-hour, 30-member law enforcement agency of commissioned officers on the campus, 24-hour surveillance focused primarily on parking lots and garages, and mental health care facilities available for troubled students, he said.

The school also keeps an emergency response plan updated, and security staff undergoes constant response training with Lawrence and Douglas County law enforcement, Cohen said.

Security officials at Newman University couldn’t be reached for comment. But the school has various emergency policies in place, focused on natural disasters and bomb threats, said Kelly Snedden, Newman’s director of communications.

Newman has communication plans to notify faculty, students and staff in emergencies, she said.

Wichita school district spokeswoman Susan Arensman said nothing would change at schools today based upon the shootings.

“We’ll be as diligent as we’ve always been,” she said. “One of the things we instill in our students, if you hear anything or suspect anything, even if it’s just kidding around, tell your counselors, your principals, just tell an adult.”

Beggs, as he began to come to grips with what happened in Virginia on Monday, said, “The other thing we need to do is make sure that this doesn’t cause us to stop living.”

Other campuses are considering measures such as mandatory student identification checks before they would be permitted into classrooms or campus buildings.

Hoffman, one of Beggs’ students, said he is opposed to those kinds of regulations.

“I think that would be a huge hassle,” Hoffman said. “How many people are coming into the classrooms that shouldn’t be there? Even people that should don’t go.”

Contributing: Sarah Lavalee, Beccy Tanner, Amanda O'Toole
April 1, 2007 marks the 25th Anniversary of Ensz & Jester, P.C. and they are proud to announce that:

On January 1, 2007, Matthew J. Gist was named a shareholder in the firm. He concentrates his practice in the areas of employment law, commercial and governmental liability litigation. His litigation knowledge and experience is also utilized in the areas of commercial and business law. Matt received his law degree from the University of Kansas in 2002. He is admitted to practice in Missouri and Kansas. Matt has been with the firm since 2002.

Samuel G. MacRoberts joined the firm as an Associate in the fall of 2006. He attended the University of Kansas where he received his law degree in 2006. He is admitted to practice in the State of Kansas. Sam's primary areas of practice are in public entity defense and corporate law.
HIGH TECH | Entrepreneurs look to future

A PIPELINE TO PROGRESS

Program helps mentor those in technology startups.

Don Imus caused a domino effect of dollars
TECH: Experts offer good advice

FROM DI

the Pipeline program. "We want to help them get further faster and avoid pitfalls."

Running a high-tech startup always is a high-risk adventure, but attempting it here can bring added challenges.

The region isn't flush with investment capital to fuel young businesses, and finding entrepreneurial peers able to offer been-there, done-that advice and empathy isn't easy. Obtaining affordable space with laboratories, room for offices and services needed by a fledgling firm also can be a trick.

Cultivating entrepreneurship with a program like Pipeline can provide a powerful catalyst for the area economy, said Lesa Mitchell, a vice president with Kansas City's Ewing Marion Kauffman Foundation.

A similar mentoring program involving the Massachusetts Institute of Technology has been highly successful in such areas as broadening professional contacts and improving business acumen of the entrepreneurs it aids, said Mitchell, who specializes in initiatives to advance innovations.

"The Pipeline project is about as close to that as you can get," she said.

Whether they are operating in Boston or Lawrence and Kansas City, entrepreneurs do best when they have access to a rich pool of experienced mentors, potential partners or peers who understand what they are going through.

"What we know is important for the growth of entrepreneurs is their social networks," Mitchell said.

The Pipeline program's blend of high-powered networking and financial fundamentals began earlier this year in a meeting room in the back of a Topeka hotel.

Think of it as a boot camp for business.

"This is four years of finance and two years of graduate school boiled down to 15 minutes," Rob Adams, an Austin, Texas, venture capitalist, former high-tech executive, author and business school faculty member, said as he guided the participants through a discussion about business models.

Adams is part of a corps of veteran investors, business experts and others that the Pipeline pro-

gram has brought in to work with the participants. Sometimes they lead workshops. Other times they meet one-on-one to share experiences and talk about specific challenges.

A tall, lanky Texan, Adams spoke with the authority of someone who earned his entrepreneurial spurs while riding the Internet economy as it bucked through its frenzied rise, crash and re-emergence. He was founder and managing director of an Austin, Texas, venture capital firm's offshoot called AV Labs, which guided technology startups through a crucible in which they were focused and hardened. Or revealed as flawed and then abandoned.

He came to Kansas preaching the power of exhaustive research and intense analysis required to sort promising business ideas from potential pitfalls.

Once the idea is refined, Adams said, call 100 potential customers and see whether they are interested.

"If you do this work, it will take you a month, it will let you know whether it is worth investing the next two to four years of your life," said Adams.

This is a worthy investment for several reasons, Adams explained.

The information will guide development of the company's products so they will be most attractive to potential customers, which should bring a sales boost once marketing begins. Plus, investors are more willing to back a company when their questions about its prospects are answered with solidly researched details and other evidence about how the company fits in the market.

"If you can get somebody to pay you money, you are onto something," Adams said. "That is an indication you are fixing a problem."

The advice Adams offered that day was typical of the combination of teaching and encouragement that will be offered to the 10 Kansas entrepreneurs over the course of this year.

Organizers selected a mix of participants from the realm of life sciences to software to other technology. Some run established businesses, others are just getting started, and still others are working to transform ideas into viable
ventures. Here are three stories offering examples of the varying experiences that entrepreneurs are bringing to the program and how they are applying its lessons.

**Experimenting**

Ellies is striving to guide OsteoGeneX Inc., her new business, as successfully as she did the experiments producing breakthrough discoveries about genes back when she worked exclusively in the laboratory.

She's got a potential new drug that could be a hot seller. Additional study and patient tests lie ahead, but it is expected that the drug can stimulate bone production. This would offer a key competitive edge over standard treatments aiming simply to slow bone loss due to osteoporosis.

Another potentially lucrative opportunity involves using the technology to produce a "bone cement," which could be used on its own or to coat artificial hips, screws or other medical devices used by orthopedic surgeons.

While Ellies hopes her company someday rivals Marion Laboratories at its height, for now OsteoGeneX more resembles Ewing Marion Kauffman's pharmaceutical company when he began running it out of his basement in the 1950s.

Ellies has an arrangement providing her modest laboratory and office space in the basement of the Higuchi Bioscience Center at the University of Kansas in Lawrence.

Lacking a team of research colleagues to share the work, she squeezes science tasks in with business duties.

She toiled in far more scientifically luxurious surroundings when she first came to Kansas City in 2000 with the early wave of scientists beginning work at the Stowers Institute.

She left England's National Institute for Medical Research to join Stowers and work in the lab of Robb Krumlauf, an internationally renowned researcher and the institute's scientific director. When her term as a postdoctoral researcher ended, she jumped at the chance to start a biotechnology venture.

In addition to linking her with new advisers providing valuable guidance for OsteoGeneX, the Pipeline program has helped Ellies quickly focus her product development and other efforts in narrow areas where she enjoys a unique advantage.

"Scientists are trained to study something to death," Ellies said. "It is making me a better scientist."

**Engineering a business**

Toby Rush trained as a mechanical engineer, but it was only a matter of time before he became a chief executive.

"I have always wanted to do my own business," said Rush, president and CEO of Rush Tracking Systems in Lenexa.

While growing up on a farm near Atchison, Rush helped out at home but also assembled a straw and hay business and dabbled in raising and selling pigs.

His interests shifted to the high-tech realm while working as a business consultant after graduating from Kansas State University.

He focused initially on complex back-office computer systems, but eventually became fascinated by mobile and wireless technology.

He started by working on a prototype project and his career advanced. He oversaw business units and eventually gained a vice president position.

In 2003, Rush partnered with George Rothwell to create their own firm. The idea was to focus on a then-emerging technology that relied on tiny computer chips to communicate via radio waves with computers.

Place a chip on a box, for example, and a warehouse manager automatically can track its location and more efficiently guide such tasks as truck loading.

"Having the right product on the right shelf at the right time is very important," Rush said.

Serendipitously, within months of the company's formation, Wal-Mart ordered all of its suppliers to tag their boxes with the specialized radio frequency identification, or RFID, computer chips to improve management of the sprawling retail chain's inventory.

This high-profile action sent Wal-Mart vendors scrambling to adopt the new technology. Many other companies also started taking a closer look.

Rush and his firm quickly won some consulting contracts. They since have expanded their services to range from offering advice to picking the right technology and installing it.

Rush Tracking tallied a couple million dollars in sales in 2006 and is on track for $5 million to $10 million this year, Rush said.

"We started in my spare bedroom," Rush said. "Now we have 15 to 20 guys across the country."

Rush is using the Pipeline program to close in on his next targets.

"Sales and marketing has always been our biggest deficiency," Rush
said. “We’ve always been very technically oriented.”

The 100-calls process Adams advocates is helping Rush Tracking confirm the best customers and approach to selling a new package of RFID services, equipment and software.

“I would have gotten there, but it would have been slower,” Rush said. “This is going to accelerate our success.”

**Blending school, business**

Lisa Friis long has straddled the boundary dividing academia and commerce.

A member of the engineering faculty at the University of Kansas, Friis has degrees in biomedical and mechanical engineering. She also has business experience from helping to refine medical devices while working at Orthopedic Research Institute Inc. in Wichita.

Finding ways to apply breakthroughs emerging from her research has been a priority.

“I have always wanted to teach,” Friis said. “But I also always wanted to have something come out of the ideas I had.”

With the Pipeline program, Friis is working to develop an initiative that would extend her blended approach to academics and business to a broader audience.

Although she still is developing many of the specifics, the idea essentially is to create a new technology center at KU.

Businesses would come for technical advice and hands-on assistance in developing cutting-edge products.

Examples might include tissue-engineered joints or new devices measuring how well damaged bones are healing.

Students and professors would gain valuable experience and exposure to how companies operate.

“I wanted to have real-world experience and bring that into the classroom,” Friis said.

Friis intends to apply many of the Pipeline-recommended techniques to her formation of a program that is valued by private-sector executives, professors and students.

She will look to existing efforts at Purdue University and other schools, drawing on the most effective approaches.

“I need to do market validation,” Friis said. “We are approaching the educational side as a business.”

To reach Jason Gertzen, call (816) 234-4899 or send e-mail to jgertzen@kcstar.com.
A former Stowers Institute for Medical Research scientist, Debra Ellies hopes a potential new drug might be a big seller someday.

A company that started in a spare room now has "15 to 20 guys across the country," Toby Rush says of his Rush Tracking Systems.

Spine surgeon William Rosenberg attended a recent workshop in Overland Park conducted by the Pipeline fellowship program of the Kansas Technology Enterprise Corp.
About the Pipeline

The Kansas Technology Enterprise Corp. is investing about $800,000 in the Pipeline program to identify some of the state’s most promising entrepreneurs and assist them with networking and business training.

Each participant receives a stipend of $36,000 for the yearlong program.

In addition to intensive quarterly workshops, participants are attending events such as the InvestMidwest venture capital conference in Overland Park and the Biotechnology Industry Organization annual conference in Boston.
Four key areas in electronic marketing

Creativity and Initiative make a difference with new platforms, says researcher at KU.

By HUMA KHAN Special to The Star

With just about everyone jumping on the e-marketing bandwagon, businesses need more than just an unusual product or idea to set themselves apart.

Several “bleeding edge practices” can help companies succeed, according to Kissan Joseph, an associate professor and a Stockton Research Fellow at the University of Kansas.

“What makes a difference is creativity and initiative in executing these platforms,” said Joseph, who shared his four “As” this month in a presentation to dozens of small-business owners and others at KU’s Edwards Campus in Overland Park.

I Acquisition of customers.
Most companies focus on their most popular items, but e-marketing can serve demand in low-profile areas, Joseph said.
Companies such as Freightquote.com in Lenexa have expanded into niche markets that have little competition or visibility, he said.

Web content and marketing campaigns should be highly targeted, Joseph said.

“In today’s clutter in society where people are bombarded with messages, you’ve got to be able to personalize it to current needs of customers,” he said.

II Architecture of products and services.
Consider how you present online sales.
Customer inconvenience is not always a downside and can actually add value, Joseph said.
For example, some travel sites don’t give customers flight information until an airline ticket is purchased. In that sense, they create customer inconvenience, but they also make it seem that

SEE MARKETING D23

MARKETING: Creativity matters

FROM D21

they are giving customers a cheaper ticket, Joseph said.
Many companies offer free information on Web sites, but they charge for higher value-added products. By doing this, they attract customers who want low-quality information and those who are willing to pay more to get specific information or a service.

Joseph said companies must compartmentalize offerings to create and capture value.

III Appropriating customers and employee competence.
Customer feedback can help improve services or products, Joseph said.

“Digital tools allow you to appropriate and co-opt some of the competence,” he said, adding that it is important to provide incentives for people to go to your Web site.

Analysis of marketing return on investment.
Constantly watch ROI numbers, Joseph said.
He noted that some companies examine which Google search terms are most popular or measure what search terms on their own sites yield the most clicks.

Joseph recommended that companies browse through numbers. Even if they are not always accurate, numbers can be used to conduct predictive modeling.
Ford chief says he thinks autoworkers and companies realize what is at stake in upcoming contract talks.

By RANDOLPH HEASTER
The Kansas City Star

Ford Motor Co.’s top executive said Monday in Lawrence that he was “cautiously optimistic” about upcoming contract talks between domestic automakers and their unions.

The auto companies and the autoworkers all realize what is at stake during a crucial period for the industry, said Ford chief executive Alan Mulally.

“The only way this can be OK going forward is that we are competitive, not just on quality, but on cost structure,” said Mulally. He noted that Ford spends $1,400 to $1,800 more for each vehicle produced than its foreign competitors.

The UAW’s national contract with domestic automakers expires in September.

Mulally, a Kansas native and Kansas graduate, spoke to local reporters at the Dole Institute of Politics before giving a lecture Monday evening at the Lied Center. His visit was sponsored by KU’s School of Business and School of Engineering.

Mulally mentioned the recent competitive operating agreements that Ford and the UAW have negotiated at various plants, including Ford’s Claycomo plant, to improve efficiencies. In the agreement approved at Claycomo in December, for example, workers agreed to allow Ford to schedule employees to work 10 hours for four days a week at straight pay.

“We’ve made tremendous progress to create a more competitive Ford through those agreements,” Mulally said. “I am cautiously optimistic that during this critical time we will be ready to come together on a better plan.”

The Ford executive said Ford is on pace in its reorganization plan, which was accelerated last year. The plan will eventually lead...
FORD: Efficiency is the goal

FROM D3

to the closure of 16 plants in North America and the elimination of more than 50,000 hourly and salaried jobs. Last year’s loss of $12.7 billion was the worst ever for the 103-year-old company, which suffered as sales of gas-guzzling SUVs and pickups slumped.

More details updating the restructuring will be disclosed when Ford’s first-quarter earnings are released later this month, said Mulally, a former Boeing Co. executive who made his name in part by helping that company regain its financial footing by becoming smaller and more efficient.

In addition to the downsizing, Mulally said, Ford is trying to accelerate its development of fuel-efficient cars that appeal to more consumers.

He also discussed the various initiatives that Ford and other companies have undertaken on alternative-fuel vehicles, including gas-electric hybrids and research on a hydrogen-electric car.

Energy conservation “is good business, but ultimately consumers will decide what kind of vehicles we build.”

Mulally, who became Ford’s CEO in September, had visited the Ford Claycomo plant in late January for the unveiling of new models of the compact sport utility vehicles built there.

He was chosen CEO to replace Bill Ford Jr., who remains chairman.

Mulally is currently facing what many consider to be Ford’s shakiest financial situation in its history.

Ford has stated it does not expect to be profitable again until 2009.

The Claycomo plant, which produces the F-150 pickup and compact SUVs Ford Escape and Mercury Mariner, so far has remained relatively unscathed by the restructuring. About 2,100 workers have taken early retirement or buyout packages, but most of them are being replaced by displaced Ford workers from other plants.

To reach Randolph Heaster, call (816) 234-4746 or send e-mail to rheaster@kcstar.com.
Security a concern at area universities

By JOHN SHULTZ
The Kansas City Star

If a shooter stalked the halls of an area university, emergency responders would be ready with an array of tools — including building lockdowns, student alerts and standard police power.

But whether any response could head off a tragedy like the one that occurred at Virginia Tech on Monday is uncertain.

"This is every chancellor's greatest fear," UMKC Chancellor Guy Bailey said. "We have plans for these things ... but when you have a crazed gunman like that, even the best plans are inadequate."

Monday's massacre was startling for both its scale and the fact that it involved two incidents in a roughly two-hour span at sites half a mile apart on a 2,600-acre college campus.

After the 1999 shootings at Columbine High School in Colorado, officials responded with beefed up security, metal detectors, secured entrances and a careful focus on the emotional well-being of students.

But college authorities have far more challenges, experts said. Their student populations are bigger — Virginia Tech has more than 26,000 students — the campuses are larger, and most public institutions like to maintain a more open feel, officials said.

"It's almost impossible to have a similar security environment that high schools and middle schools can," said Motoko Akiba, a school security expert and professor at the University of Missouri-Columbia.

MU, the University of Kansas and UMKC have security cameras and armed police. They do not have metal detectors, however, and classroom buildings are largely left open.

Dorms are a different story. MU has electronic keycard entry, and KU requires guests to be signed in by a resident.

However, if a gunman lived in the residence hall or knew the victims — as some speculated about Monday's incident — neither method would be likely to prevent an incident, officials said. The measures would be even less effective if a shooter was suicidal, as was the Virginia Tech assailant.

"If somebody wants to do harm to somebody else, it's very difficult to prevent," said UMKC Police Chief Scott Shelton. "Once something like this incident starts to take place, then it's our responsibility to stop the threat as quickly as possible."

That may mean evacuating buildings or locking everything down, Shelton said, and telling students to shelter in place.

For security reasons, none of the area universities would discuss specific emergency plans. But after Columbine and the 9/11 terrorist attacks, training for emergencies has been commonplace.

UMKC's police force also tries to keep tabs on reports of threatening or potentially dangerous behavior.

"The only way you can absolutely prevent it from happening is if you have prior information," Shelton said.

The Star's Dave Helling contributed to this report.

To reach John Shultz, call (816) 234-4427 or send e-mail to jshultz@kcstar.com.
TOPEKA (AP) — Gov. Kathleen Sebelius wants legislators to spend nearly $63 million as a first installment on long-needed repairs to state universities. Legislative budget chiefs say there will be additional money, but how much remains up in the air.

The deferred maintenance money was part of the governor’s request presented Tuesday for an additional $203 million in the upcoming budget year. The money would be added to the final budget bill lawmakers will consider when they return April 25 from their annual break.

Legislators already have sent the governor the $12.3 billion main budget to finance state government after July 1.

The governor’s request includes $47.7 million as a one-time appropriation to address the top priority needs on seven campuses, plus $16 million for unspecified maintenance projects.

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The governor’s request includes $47.7 million as a one-time appropriation to address the top priority needs on seven campuses, plus $16 million for unspecified maintenance projects.

“Earlier in this legislative session, I proposed a more comprehensive plan for dealing with university deferred maintenance. However, neither my plan, nor any other, has been enacted,” Sebelius said in her request to the House Appropriations and Senate Ways and Means committees.

Sebelius also asked for an additional $56.8 million for the current year, with most of that for growth in social service programs and to repay some Medicaid funds to the federal government.

The House panel began working on the budget bill Tuesday and the Senate committee will begin work Wednesday. The final version will be worked out by negotiators from the two chambers.

The governor and the Kansas Board of Regents have urged legislators to address the backlog of $663 million worth of projects.

Budget experts met this week to review state revenue and said while the economy is in good shape, legislators don’t have large surpluses to take care of all funding requests, including state buildings, expanding social services or making huge tax cuts.

The question is what legislators eventually will do with the governor’s request for the campuses.

“I have no idea at this time how much of it will stay, but it probably will be in that ballpark,” said House Appropriations Committee Chairman Sharon Schwartz, R-Washington.

Schwartz said she wants legislators to have more over sight of how the money will be spent.

“There ought to be policies approved by the Legislature rather than a line item in the budget,” she said. “It’s a big enough issue that the full Legislature needs to weigh in on it.”

Sen. Ways and Means Committee Chairman Dwayne Umbarger said deferred maintenance will be a serious contender, but just how much it will remain depends on what legislators decide.

“I’m fairly confident that we are going to designate significant resources to deal with deferred maintenance,” said Umbarger, R-Thayer. “It is always the process of prioritizing and seeing where the dollars are most needed.”

Umbarger said universities are the best judges of their most pressing needs.

“The institutions are more capable of prioritizing their list than we under the dome. I want to make sure we don’t replace their knowledge with our perceptions,” he said.

The issue of deferred maintenance at the various campuses has been a lingering one, with legislators doing little to make a significant dent in the backlog.

The last major legislative effort to deal with deferred maintenance was in 1996, when legislators authorized about $164 million in bonds to pay for repairs in a program dubbed “Crumbling Classrooms.”

Earlier this year, Sebelius outlined a plan for providing $575 million to universities over six years, but the idea was a nonstarter among most legislators.

Some legislators have suggested that universities tap private donors or increase tuition to help finance repairs.
GOVERNOR’S CAMPUS PROJECTS

TOPEKA (AP) — Breakdown of how Gov. Kathleen Sebelius wants to spend $62.7 million for deferred maintenance projects on university campuses.

- University of Kansas: Utility tunnel improvements, $8.8 million.
- University of Kansas Medical Center: Applegate Energy Center improvements, $7.9 million.
- Kansas State University: Utilities, infrastructure and power plant improvements, $18.4 million.
- Wichita State University: Duerksen Fine Arts Center improvements, $3.2 million.
- Emporia State University: William Allen White Library improvements, $3.6 million.
- Pittsburg State University: McCray Hall improvements, $1.9 million.
- Fort Hays State University: Picken Hall improvements, $3.8 million.
- Unspecified campus maintenance projects, $15 million.

TOTAL: $62.7 million.

NOTE: Numbers may not add due to rounding.

Source: Governor’s Budget Amendment.
The Kansas Board of Regents wants Gov. Kathleen Sebelius to submit a $47.7 million budget amendment as a down payment on repairs to state universities.

The action comes as the House Appropriations Committee started work Tuesday on the final state budget and as available revenue shrinks because of tax cuts, natural disasters and a costly settlement with the federal government for Medicaid expenses. The Senate Ways and Means Committee will start its work today.

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“If we intend to keep the best and brightest students in Kansas, we must invest in and protect our state university infrastructure,” Robinson said.

Sebelius’ office declined to say whether the governor would issue a budget amendment for the funds, although she has said in the past that the Legislature must address the problem.
Universities, states weigh responses

BY STEVE ROCK
The Kansas City Star

In the aftermath of the Virginia Tech slayings, college students from throughout the Kansas City area are paying their respects.

Meanwhile, university leaders and the governors of Missouri and Kansas are taking stock of safety and emergency plans on the states' campuses.

Vigils, memorials

Students at the University of Missouri-Kansas City planned a candlelight vigil for late Tuesday, trying to make sense of the tragedy that killed 33 people more than 800 miles away.

Tuesday afternoon at the University of Kansas, students were invited to convey their feelings on a banner that was displayed in front of Wescoe Hall. The banner will be sent to Virginia Tech. KU student leaders also distributed ribbons to honor the victims and planned to hold a candlelight vigil Tuesday night.

A vigil was scheduled Tuesday night at the University of Missouri-Columbia student union.

At Kansas State University, campus ministers have organized a memorial service at noon Friday in the Student Union.

Classes will be delayed today at the University of St. Mary in Leavenworth, so students, faculty and staff can attend an outdoor prayer vigil at 10:45 a.m.

Safety, counseling

K-State will host a panel discussion Thursday in the Student Union so faculty and students can hear about the school's emergency plans and ask questions of university officials.

KU's interim director of counseling and psychological services has written a memo that may be distributed to all faculty and staff. It offers tips about how to deal with traumatic events like the one at Virginia Tech. It stresses the importance of such things as talking aloud about the situation and not immersing oneself in an endless loop of morbid news footage.

At MU, school officials on Tuesday conducted a previously planned drill of the university's emergency operations plan. Part of the drill included a "shooter," and participants responded as the "shooter" moved to the roof of Ellis Library.

The university also has a Web site, mualert.missouri.edu, that reports the alert conditions on the campus and offers safety tips and information for students, faculty and visitors.

Governors respond

Missouri: Gov. Matt Blunt on Tuesday announced the creation of a task force to examine security on state college campuses. The Campus Security Task Force will look at emergency response plans and recommend any needed improvements.

Blunt said. The task force is expected to submit a report by next fall.

Blunt said the task force should look at whether a campus should be locked down immediately after a shooting. "I believe it's better to overreact than underreact," he said.

Kansas: A commission that is looking at safety in kindergarten through 12-grade education will lend its expertise to the state's universities, Gov. Kathleen Sebelius said.

Our universities have already said they intend to learn from this tragedy by reviewing current security procedures and determining where improvements can be made," Sebelius said in a statement. Sebelius said Attorney General Paul Morrison also has offered to assist efforts to study campus safety.

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