



NORTHWEST FLORIDA STATE COLLEGE

Memo

To: Board of Trustees

From: Mel Ponder, President

Date: January 21, 2025

Re: Sikes Congressional Office 6-Month Lease Extension

In 2023, Congressman Gaetz's office inquired if the College had available space to lease in Crestview to serve as the Congressman's District Office. The College has historically provided office space to state and federal representatives to provide constituent services. Following Board approval in February 2023, the College leased the historic Sikes Congressional Office space plus three connected College offices, one classroom, and ancillary storage space for the purpose of serving as a congressional district office.

The House of Representatives pays \$3,107.50 monthly for the space, and the College completed the initial renovation and operational work to minimally update the space to operate as a district office. The College has not begun further capital improvements such as replacing the elevator and renovating the bathrooms, which will be a significant institutional cost if incurred in the future.

The lease would have naturally expired on January 2, 2025, at the conclusion of the Congressman's term. Considering the upcoming election for the congressional seat, however, the Clerk of the House has requested to retain the lease under existing terms through June 30, 2025. This extension will allow the election to take place and discussions to be held at that time regarding whether the space will continue as a district office for the newly elected member of Congress. The College recommends the extension upon existing terms and with no further monetary investment in capital improvement until a decision is reached regarding any renewal beyond June 30, 2025.

Enclosed with this memo is the Sikes Center 6-Month District Office Lease Extension which would extend the lease upon existing terms and prior fully executed Sikes Center District Office Lease, which includes floor plans of the leased space.

RECOMMENDATION:

The Board of Trustees approves the enclosed District Office Lease with the Clerk of the U.S. House of Representatives to extend the existing congressional office lease at the Sikes Center through June 30, 2025, as presented.