For decades, the Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health (JHSPH) has led its peers as the top recipient of federal grants and contracts. But public funding comes at a price. Just as overreliance on foreign oil threatens America’s energy security, overreliance on government funding threatens the School’s fiscal security. Compared with peer universities, Johns Hopkins has less flexible funding from endowment, gifts, state aid, or tuition. The School’s most important funding challenge is to reduce this differential and expand private income sources to match our mission’s global scope.

Faculty are under unrelenting pressure to fund their own salary, an effort that drains away time and energy for teaching or just pursuing a novel idea with potential. Every successful grant application demands many hours of grant writing, assembling supporting documentation, revising proposals, reporting, and ensuring compliance with federal guidelines. And these days, even top-rated proposals are often denied funding. This trend will only continue to worsen in an era of national fiscal crisis. Dollar for dollar, private support has a far greater impact because it conserves faculty effort and fosters innovation.

Consistent, sustaining funding for faculty is essential for the School’s long-term stability. The deanship and five of the School’s 10 department chairs are not endowed, so that the cost of salary and benefits diverts significant departmental resources that could support other critical activities. Without the already invested in assembling equipment and training staff are rendered useless. Innovation grants will sustain continued productivity for promising investigators while they prepare and submit a revised application. Emerging Scholar endowed professorships will enable junior faculty to “jump off the treadmill” by providing three years of early career support for intensive research to generate preliminary data for grant applications. Such protected time is a great recruiting incentive for the best investigators in new fields. Finally, a faculty recruitment and retention fund will provide the resources and flexibility to make strategic “rising star” hires that serve as catalysts for forming first-rate divisions and departments.

New funding will enable the Bloomberg School to approach faculty recruitment and retention in a systematic, focused manner that will ensure the School’s future stability and success.

The faculty represent the most in-depth and comprehensive bank of public health expertise on the planet.

burden of raising salary support, senior faculty can “feed the village” of other department faculty and students. Endowed professorships are also highly attractive incentives for recruiting faculty to anchor existing programs or nucleate new ones.

These funds are urgently needed. When an outstanding laboratory loses grant support, the time and resources