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December 3, 1997

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

EIU PLEASED WITH OUTCOME OF SPECIAL LEGISLATIVE SESSION

CHARLESTON -- The \$16.8 million renovation and expansion of Eastern Illinois University's Booth Library has moved one step closer to reality following approval of a supplemental capital appropriations bill by the Illinois House during a special legislative session Tuesday.

House Bill 398, which included legislation that revised the fiscal year 1998 budget and included all capital funding recommended by the governor for FY 1998, was adopted by the Senate during the fall session which ended last month, but failed to be acted on by the House prior to adjournment.

"We are thrilled and delighted that Eastern has received funding for the Booth Library renovation. This has been a long and involved process that has finally come to closure. We are very grateful for the strong leadership of Sen. Judy Myers. Rep. Dale Righter also was an important supporter of this bill. We also want to thank Gov. Jim Edgar for his continuing support of higher education. The Booth Library renovation is an extremely worthwhile project that will allow us to preserve and improve Eastern's educational facilities," said Eastern President David

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Jorns.

The Booth Library renovation project has been on the Illinois Board of Higher Education's top 10 list of university building projects statewide for about three years. The planning phase of the library began this summer following the release of \$1 million in state funds, and is expected to take about a year to complete. The renovation and expansion to follow will modernize existing facilities and add classrooms, administrative offices and a small auditorium.

Booth Library -- both the original building and 1968 addition -- has, for some time, been showing severe decay as a result of heavy use and limited maintenance budgets. The building is designed for a student population of 6,500, thus making it 50 percent overused by Eastern's current student population of 11,777. This over-use leads to increased wear on all building systems.

Also included in the supplemental capital appropriations bill for FY 1998 is funding for capital renewal projects at Eastern totalling \$564,100. These funds will be used to address significant campus deferred maintenance needs.