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OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

November 1, 2018

Senator Jim Stalzer
Sent via email to jim.stalzer@sdlegislature.gov

Representative Sue Peterson
Sent via email to sue.peterson@sdlegislature.gov

RE: SD Board of Regents policies on free speech and intellectual diversity

Dear Sen. Stalzer and Rep. Peterson,

The information below addresses your correspondence dated October 5, 2018, regarding the South Dakota Board of Regents' (BOR) policies on free speech and intellectual diversity. Each of your twenty (20) questions is restated below, and under each, the response provided by Board staff, and where appropriate, individual universities.

The notion of "intellectual diversity" is intertwined throughout your queries. The BOR and its institutions understand and apply "intellectual diversity" in a comprehensive and multidimensional manner. Educational environments are characterized by the spirit of free inquiry, which requires the right to examine, question, modify, uphold or reject traditional, new or emerging ideas and beliefs. The concept of an unchallengeable doctrine is inconsistent with the spirit of a university. Maintaining the freedom to reason and dispute on the basis of observation and study are necessary to the advancement of knowledge. It is paramount that our universities maintain an environment that is conducive to speculation, experiment and creation. Our institutions strive to hire faculty and staff that will embody, foster and promote this type of learning environment. It is with this understanding of intellectual diversity that our responses below are provided.

- 1. In light of BOR president's stated goals, please explain in detail how the BOR will aggressively pursue the promotion of intellectual diversity on South Dakota campuses. How will the BOR avoid mere tokenism, i.e. the creation of just one or two counter-voices? How will the BOR handle any push back from faculty who resist changes designed to promote intellectual diversity?**

The BOR approved the first reading of BOR Policy 1:32 at its October meeting, which it intends to take up for final approval in December, which states:

"...It is the Board's fundamental commitment to the principle that viewpoints may not be suppressed because the ideas put forth are thought by some or even by most members of the institutions' community to be offensive, unwise, immoral, or wrong-headed. Controversial speech and robust debate are expected and valued at the institutions. The right to engage in such expression is one of the rights protected by the United States Constitution. Indeed, encouraging professional diversity in faculty and fostering the ability of members of the institutions' community to engage in such debate and deliberation in an effective and responsible manner is an essential part of the institutions' educational missions..."

The presidents of our institutions are charged with providing academic leadership and promoting academic excellence at their institutions and formulating educational policies and academic standards consistent with BOR policy. It is through BOR policy and the BOR's employment and oversight of the presidents of our institutions that it ensures and promotes a commitment to intellectual diversity on our campuses.

- 2. We are concerned that the proposed changes to BOR free speech policies only state that "professional diversity" will be promoted in the future. The more appropriate phrase, in keeping with the work of Heterodox Academy and other reform organizations, is "intellectual diversity." Will the BOR substitute "intellectual diversity" for the more vague and uncertain "professional diversity" in the policy changes it is proposing?**

The BOR will discuss this recommended change during its public consideration of the policy at its December meeting.

- 3. On page 7 of the BOR response to the Qualm letter the BOR states that the BOR "encourages intellectual diversity" on campus. What is the specific evidence that the BOR is aggressively encouraging intellectual diversity at the present time? Please give detailed and specific examples.**

The BOR approved the first reading of BOR Policy 1:32 at its October meeting, which it intends to take up for final approval in December, which states:

“...It is the Board’s fundamental commitment to the principle that viewpoints may not be suppressed because the ideas put forth are thought by some or even by most members of the institutions’ community to be offensive, unwise, immoral, or wrong-headed. Controversial speech and robust debate are expected and valued at the institutions. The right to engage in such expression is one of the rights protected by the United States Constitution. Indeed, encouraging professional diversity in faculty and fostering the ability of members of the institutions’ community to engage in such debate and deliberation in an effective and responsible manner is an essential part of the institutions’ educational missions...”

The presidents of our institutions are charged with providing academic leadership and promoting academic excellence at their institutions and formulating educational policies and academic standards consistent with BOR policy. It is through BOR policy and the BOR’s employment of institutional presidents that it ensures and promotes a commitment to intellectual diversity on our campuses.

- 4. On page 7 of the BOR response to the Qualm letter the BOR states that there is no evidence of a lack of intellectual diversity on South Dakota campuses. The BOR cites zero evidence to prove this claim. The BOR response focuses on student evaluation procedures and the absence of student responses to a confusing and obscure complaint system that few students will ever bother to use. Once again, can the BOR provide specific and substantive evidence of intellectual diversity among its faculty? Is the BOR aware of the report entitled "Homogenous" issued by the National Association of Scholars on April 24, 2018? Is the BOR aware of the absence of intellectual diversity on campus described in this report? Does the BOR agree that this report describes a deep and troubling problem? Given the dramatically one-sided nature of the national faculty pool what is the BOR plan to encourage greater balance in hiring?**

The credentials of our faculty, their scholarly and research accomplishments, and the quality of education afforded to our graduates are testaments to the existence of intellectual diversity within our system. The Homogenous Study referenced in your question looked at the political make-up of faculty at 51 elite liberal arts colleges across the country, none of which were located in South Dakota. South Dakota Codified Law 13-49-14 states, “The Board of Regents may employ or dismiss all officers, instructors, and employees of such institutions, necessary to the proper management thereof...However, no person may be employed or dismissed by reason of any sectarian or political opinions held.”

- 5. Will it continue to be the position of the BOR that the faculty on South Dakota's public university campuses exhibit the same "intellectual, viewpoint, and political diversity" as the "citizen population in South Dakota"? Is the BOR aware that such a claim stands in great contrast to the report entitled "Homogenous" issued by the National Association of Scholars on April 24, 2018? Does the BOR have**

any evidence to support this claim? Isn't it a fair statement that the "citizen population in South Dakota" holds views quite distinct from a large majority of faculty on campus?

The Homogenous Study referenced in your question looked at the political make-up of faculty at 51 elite liberal arts colleges across the country, none of which were located in South Dakota. All applicants applying for positions within the system receive equal opportunity, limited only by each individual's knowledge, skills, and abilities, and their alignment with the duties and expectations of the position. The one exception to this is for veterans, SDCL Chapter 3-3 requires that preference be given to qualified veterans and their spouses in appointment, employment and promotion.

- 6. On page 2 of the BOR response to the Qualm letter, it states that SDSU maintains 35 different speech policies. The subsequent explanation is convoluted and confusing. Does the BOR really expect students to make sense of this level of complexity when dealing with the university bureaucracy? What steps will the BOR take to streamline this? Are all these various restrictions on speech necessary?**

SDSU did not intend to create confusion in its prior answer to this question but intended to be complete and forthright. Many of these policies are not "restrictions on speech," but instead protect forms of expression, including academic freedom, freedom in learning, freedom to assemble, and copyrights/intellectual property. Further, many of the 35 policies describe University standard operating policies and procedures, such as, student and employee misconduct or academic decisions which are appealable through a few, standardized processes—the Student Conduct Code for students or the disciplinary policy specific to faculty, civil service, or non-faculty-exempt employees.

The BOR is continuously reviewing and analyzing its policies to ensure we are providing the necessary framework, in a streamlined and reader-friendly manner. This process will continue.

- 7. In response to question 2 in the Qualm letter, some universities report that they include "diversity offices" in the process of writing campus speech codes. Is this wise given the propensity of diversity offices to advance restrictions on free speech (as indicated by the response to question 7)? Can the campuses which include "diversity offices" in the process of writing campus speech codes please explain why these offices are included and what these offices do in the process?**

Campus policy is formulated with input from a broad array of campus leadership/constituencies. If a campus has a diversity office they would have an opportunity to provide input on proposed policy just as any other campus constituency would.

- 8. The BOR staff response to question 8 in the Qualm letter is confusing. Is the BOR saying that no effort is made at the system level to invite speakers to campuses from a wide variety of political perspectives? If not, what will the BOR do to make such an effort?**

The role of the BOR is not to select speakers but to ensure our campuses are adhering to the applicable legal authority on the topic and accreditation standards and providing high quality educational opportunities for their students. Campuses routinely have a wide array of speakers with all kinds of perspectives on many different topics invited or hosted by a variety of academic departments, student groups and the universities.

- 9. The BOR staff response to question 9 in the Qualm letter is also confusing. Does the phrase "guidance is provided by each of the Human Resources offices at each campus" mean that the hiring process is subject to involvement from diversity officers and/or pressures from affirmative action offices with the intent of aiding particular kinds of candidates? When "Human Resources offices" are involved in "reviewing" campus "demographics" to look for "equal opportunity issues" does this mean that the hiring process is subject to involvement from diversity officers and/ or pressures from affirmative action offices with the intent of aiding particular kinds of candidates? What candidates are given a boost in the hiring process by involvement from diversity officers and/ or pressures from affirmative**

action offices? Be specific and give concrete examples when responding to the latter question. Are "Human Resources offices" the same as "affirmative action, diversity, and/ or equity offices or do they overlap? On page 10 the "President's Council on Diversity and Inclusiveness" is discussed-what is this and what does it do? On page 14 the "human resources vice-president" is described as analyzing the "demographics" of applicants to DSU what does this mean? On page 14 the "institutional affirmative action advisory committee" is discussed-what is this? In the answer to question 9 it is unclear how much DSU is spending on human resources/ affirmative action/ diversity/ equity etc. - please explain. On page 16 SD~U argues that its \$300,000 budget for its "Diversity, Inclusion, Equity, and Access" office is designed to make the university "more representative"-what does this mean precisely? Representative of what? On page 15 the "Multicultural Student Lounge" is discussed-what is this? How does it differ from a regular student lounge? What is its purpose? On page 17, USD's "Office of Diversity" is discussed – it's stated mission, according to its website, is "increasing the diversity of students, staff, and faculty" and "embedding diversity and inclusiveness throughout the University." In very concrete and specific terms, what does this mean and how is this mission pursued? How many taxpayer dollars are being spent on this office and this mission and how many staff are being paid to advance this mission and how much? If this kind of "diversity" can be aggressively pursued using established diversity offices with specific missions, why can't intellectual diversity be aggressively pursued in order to promote a variety of viewpoints on campus?

The campus Human Resource Offices work to ensure that the hiring process for all candidates is void of any potential bias or discrimination as prescribed by applicable state and federal statutes and regulations. No campus forces diversity hires, but our campuses are committed to providing equal opportunity without discrimination based on state and federal guidelines and requirements.

The Offices of Diversity/Inclusion/Equity promote equity, inclusion and diverse points of view on campus by seeking to engage all people within the campus community. Under the organizing principle of Inclusive Excellence, as cited by the Association for American Colleges and Universities (AAC&U), the campuses embrace a broad definition of diversity to include, but not limited to, gender, race/ethnicity, socio-economic status, sexual orientation, religion, disability, veteran status, first-generation status, nationality, citizenship, age, and other personal and social dimensions. The foregoing is accomplished through such things as workshops to support faculty in integrating best practices into the classroom, consultation and training with faculty and staff to improve recruitment, retention and success of all students, and providing leadership for portions of the Higher Learning Commission accreditation process. Our campuses are committed to addressing the needs of all students, faculty and staff from a holistic approach, broadly defined.

10. The BOR and campuses report that they use affirmative action in hiring. Who benefits from the use of affirmative action and who is penalized? Be very specific when describing how campuses use affirmative action and describe which offices on campus enforce affirmative action policies.

The BOR and its institutions do not require diversity hires, nor do we penalize applicants based on status, but we do require compliance with equal opportunity and related state and federal law on nondiscriminatory hiring. The one exception to this is for veterans, SDCL Chapter 3-3 requires that preference be given to qualified veterans and their spouses in appointment, employment and promotion.

Additionally, Executive Order 11246 and related regulatory authority, require federal contractors/subcontractors who do over \$10,000 in federal contracts/subcontracts in one year to maintain an affirmative action plan. SDU, SDSM&T, SDSU, and USD routinely exceed this threshold. The affirmative action plans do not impose mandates or quotas in hiring, but rather serve as a management tool to ensure equal opportunity.

11. All of the administrative arrangements described in response to question 9 are difficult to decipher and the actions taken by these offices are difficult to account for. Please provide specific and detailed information as to how these offices in fact operate beyond the superficial explanations provided thus far. Please revisit your earlier answers.

In simplest terms, the Offices of Human Resources are responsible for assisting the campuses with employment processes. The offices of Title IX/EO handle complaints of discrimination, develop, maintain and assist with equal opportunity and related reports and statistics, and assist with nondiscrimination training. The Offices of Diversity/Inclusion/Equity assist the campuses with information about, and activities related to, an equitable and inclusive university.

- 12. On South Dakota public university campuses, have affirmative action offices, "Human Resources" offices, and/ or diversity / inclusion / equity etc. offices or administrative units ever pressured (in any form) hiring committees to make "diversity hires"? If affirmative action offices, "Human Resources" offices, and/ or diversity / inclusion / equity etc. offices or administrative units pressure hiring committees to make "diversity hires" why is it not acceptable to promote "intellectual diversity hires"?**

No offices or administrative units within the regental system pressure diversity hires. Our campuses value diversity of all kinds, especially intellectual diversity, and support and require equal opportunity. Each campus ensures that all applicants and employees receive equal opportunity, limited only by each individual's knowledge, skills, and abilities, and their alignment with the duties and expectations of the position.

- 13. The cost of the complex administrative arrangements described in response to question 9 about diversity / equity offices seems to easily exceed a million dollars (although complete responses were not provided). Please provide a full and complete accounting of every dollar spent on diversity /inclusion/ equity etc. offices along with the total spent on affirmative action offices and "Human Resources" offices. Please total the amount spent on these offices so that state legislators can tell how much taxpayer money is spent on these activities and be clear, precise, and comprehensive. Could not these funds be easily reallocated to boost funding for the programs discussed in questions 11, 12, and 15 in the Qualm letter? Why or why not?**

The accrediting body for BOR institutions, the [Higher Learning Commission \(HLC\)](#), requires universities to demonstrate a commitment to diversity. Accreditation is required for our institutions to offer students financial aid, including federal student aid, military tuition assistance and veterans' benefits. If funding were diverted from these purposes our ability to address diversity issues and maintain accreditation would be limited. As noted above, loss of accreditation means loss of substantial federal funding, which equates to losing higher education opportunities for South Dakota students.

Additionally, Executive Order 11246 and related regulatory authority, require federal contractors/subcontractors who do over \$10,000 in federal contracts/subcontracts to comply with certain equal opportunity principles. DSU, SDSM&T, SDSU, and USD routinely exceed this threshold. If funding were diverted from these purposes our ability to address these federal requirements would be limited. Failure to comply with the foregoing would result in a substantial loss of federal funding.

BHSU's Human Resources Office has a current annual budget of \$132,600. BHSU's annual budgets for Disability Services and Title IX are \$110,000 and \$130,010, respectively.

DSU's current annual Human Resources Office budget is \$360,510. DSU does not have an office of diversity/inclusion/equity.

SDSM&T's Human Resources has a current annual budget of \$412,919. SDSM&T's Office of Multicultural Affairs has a current annual budget of \$140,878.25.

SDSU's FY18 expenditures for Human Resources, including Title IX/EEO totaled \$1,115,682 (\$888,528 of which was attributed to Human Resources and \$227,154 to Title IX/EEO). SDSU's FY18 expenditures for diversity/inclusion/equity totaled \$139,318.

USD's Human Resources Office has a current annual budget of \$735,573. USD's Office for Diversity has a current annual budget of \$168,932. USD's Office of Equal Opportunity, which covers Title IX and EEOC, has a current annual budget of \$95,660.

NSU's current annual Human Resources Office budget is \$106,310. NSU does not have an office of diversity/inclusion/equity.

- 14. According to the BOR correspondence, some campuses have no diversity / inclusion / equity etc. offices or administrative units. It then seems perfectly acceptable, does it not, for all campuses to have no diversity / inclusion / equity etc. offices or administrative units? Is there any reason legislation could not be written to abolish existing diversity / inclusion / equity etc. offices or administrative units on South Dakota campuses?**

The accrediting body for BOR institutions, the [Higher Learning Commission \(HLC\)](#), requires universities to demonstrate a commitment to diversity. Accreditation is required for our institutions to offer students financial aid, including federal student aid, military tuition assistance and veterans' benefits. In the past twenty years, we have had multiple findings/recommendations from HLC regarding insufficient diversity, to include findings of unsatisfactory diversity efforts at USD in 2001 and 2011, and insufficient progress on issues related to diversity at SDSU in 2009.

As a result of these findings/recommendations, campuses have undergone various efforts to address the diversity issues identified by HLC to ensure continued accreditation. If legislation were passed prohibiting diversity / inclusion / equity efforts on our campuses, our ability to address diversity issues and maintain accreditation would be limited. As noted above, loss of accreditation means loss of federal funding, which equates to losing higher education opportunities for South Dakota students.

- 15. The USD Volante recently reported that the Student Theater Cooperative and the Diversity in Media & Entertainment Organization were pushing for reforms to "create an atmosphere of diversity and inclusiveness" in theater at USD. What does this mean precisely? What specific steps would be taken to "create an atmosphere of diversity and inclusiveness" in theater at USD?**

The Student Theatre Cooperative (STC) and the Diversity in Media & Entertainment Organization (DiME) are two independent, student-run organizations that are partnering to address the lack of female roles in USD's theatre productions. Between 2011 and 2017 only 38 percent of lead roles were played by women, even though women compose 66 percent of the theatre department. A primary goal of the organizational partnership is to sponsor a show for the STC that provides role opportunities reflective of the demographics of the theatre department.

- 16. In response to question 12, the BOR staff states that "subjects like constitutionalism, civics, political economy, classical history etc. are infused throughout the curriculum." No evidence is provided with the exception of courses under the Classics Institute at DSU. Please provide the details about the courses in constitutionalism, civics, political economy, classical history etc. that are now offered at**

South Dakota public universities, how often they are offered, and how many students take them etc. Is the BOR aware of the 2016 report from the American Council of Trustees and Alumni describing the "crisis in civic education"? The report found that only 18% of colleges require an American history course for graduation and that college graduates are extremely uninformed about basic American history and the basic workings of government. Is the BOR concerned about these findings? What can the BOR do to bolster civic education and awareness among students at South Dakota public universities?

All undergraduate students are required to complete 6 credits of social science coursework to meet general education requirements. Courses in history and government are encompassed in the list of approved courses to meet general education requirements, including HIST 151, United States History I (3 credits) and HIST 152, United States History II (3 credits). The following political science courses are also included on the approved list of courses: POLS 100, American Government (3 credits), POLS 102, American Political Issues (3 credits), POLS 210, State and Local Government (3 credits). Students have the flexibility to choose the courses they take as elective credits and these may be selected from diverse intellectual perspectives. System-wide, 4,059 students enrolled in the 5 courses listed above in 2018; 4,110 in 2017; 3,860 in 2016; and 3,766 in 2015.

In addition to these general education courses, other courses are offered at our institutions that include content on the Constitution (POLS 430, Constitutional Law, 3 credits; POLS 432, The American Presidency, 3 credits), civics (POLS 330, Civil Rights and Liberties, 3 credits), political economy (ECON 405, Comparative Economic Systems, 3 credits), with USD offering an 18 credit minor in civics leadership studies, and classical history (HIST 151, US History 1, 3 credits and US History II, 3 credits; HIST 460, American Military History, 3 credits; HIST 476, History of South Dakota, HIS 358, The U.S. Since 1941, 3 credits), etc.

- 17. The response to question 15 seems to indicate that, for example, only 38% of USD graduates take any American history or government courses. Is this accurate? What is the percentage for other colleges? DSU did not appear to respond. Does the BOR believe that 62% of USD students taking no American history or government courses and solely relying on an American history course in high school is sufficient to support strong civic engagement throughout a student's life? Would the BOR support increasing college history/government requirements? Texas requires that students at Texas universities take at least 6 hours of American history courses-would the BOR support a similar requirement?**

All undergraduate students are required to complete 6 credits of social science coursework to meet general education requirements. Courses in history and government are encompassed in the list of approved courses to meet general education requirements, including HIST 151, United States History I (3 credits) and HIST 152, United States History II (3 credits). The following political science courses are also included on the approved list of courses: POLS 100, American Government (3 credits), POLS 102, American Political Issues (3 credits), POLS 210, State and Local Government (3 credits). Students have the flexibility to choose the courses they take as elective credits and these may be selected from diverse intellectual perspectives. System-wide, 4,059 students enrolled in the 5 courses listed above in 2018; 4,110 in 2017; 3,860 in 2016; and 3,766 in 2015.

- 18. SDSU seems unresponsive to question 16. What is the total cost of creating and maintaining minors such as "Inclusion and Equity," "Women and Gender," and "Peace and Conflict Studies"? Who teaches these courses? What is the curriculum? In order to promote intellectual diversity, should the BOR consider requiring SDSU to also offer minors on the American heritage, constitutionalism,**

and/or conservative thought? Why or why not? USD offers courses with titles such as "Introduction to Multicultural Studies" and "Pirates, Outlaws and Rebels" and pays for a conference on "Women, Gender and Sexuality" and offers a minor in "Women, Gender and Sexuality Studies." What are these courses/minors/conference? What is the curriculum? Who is in charge of them? How much do they cost USD? Should the BOR consider advocating that South Dakota public universities offer minors in "American Constitutional Heritage," "Conservative Political Thought," "The Great Books," or "The Heritage of Ancient Greece and Rome"? Why or why not? In general, can the BOR develop/ advocate more minors similar to "The Great Books" and fewer similar to "Inclusion and Equity" and wouldn't such a reprioritization better meet the expectations of parents, taxpayers, and students?

Most minors are composed of courses that are required as part of other academic programs resulting in minimal to no cost to the departments that offer them. In other words, the courses in the minor would be delivered regardless of whether the minor was offered or not.

The curricula for the [Inclusion and Equity](#), [Women and Gender](#), and [Peace and Conflict Studies](#) minors are available on the SDSU website and have been hyperlinked to the corresponding titles.

The curricula for all other minors offered by SDSU are available at the SDSU website including minors in [Aerospace Studies](#); [History](#); [Leadership](#); [Military Science](#); and [Political Science](#).

An academic minor within a degree program enables a student to make an inquiry into a secondary discipline or field of study, or to investigate a particular content theme. Minors provide guidance for students in selecting complimentary coursework to make them better prepared for the workplace and civic responsibilities.

SDSU offers 94 different minors including Accounting, Computer Science, History, Leadership, and Military Science, as well as the specific minors identified in the question (Inclusion and Equity, Women and Gender, and Peace and Conflict Studies). No SDSU students are required to complete a particular minor except for ROTC students who complete either the Military Science minor for Army ROTC students or the Aerospace Studies minor for Air Force ROTC students.

USD also offers a minor in Women, Gender and Sexuality Studies. The program is an 18-hour interdisciplinary minor, which can be earned as part of a B.A. or B.S. degree. With the exception of one required course – Introduction to Women, Gender and Sexuality Studies (WMST 247) – all elective courses are cross-listed in other majors and minors, such as sociology, political science, media & journalism and art history. The WMST 247 course, which is offered once a year, had nine students enrolled in spring 2018, and netted the university \$1,323. There are currently 20 students enrolled for spring 2019, and the course is projected to net the university \$10,437 – all funds that directly benefit USD.

As part of its commitment to research and creative activity in all disciplines across campus, USD also hosts a biennial Women, Gender and Sexuality Studies Research Conference. This conference takes place at USD and attracts national scholars from across a variety of disciplines to present their research. The conference is funded by external grants, donations and tuition funds, and does not benefit from state funding.

One USD professor is responsible for organizing the research conference. Professors are required to contribute a certain percentage of their workload to service. In this instance, 10% of the professor's workload is dedicated to service. Within that 10% of service activity, the professor also advises students, serves on a variety of campus committees, serves as vice chair of the Humanities Division in the College

of Arts & Sciences, performs department-level service and coordinates the Women, Gender & Sexuality Studies minor. Organizing the Women, Gender & Sexuality Studies Research Conference accounts for no more than 2% of the professor's overall workload. Ninety percent of her workload is devoted to teaching and research.

- 19. With respect to question 18, it is seems from the responses provided by the BOR staff and from observations during the 2018 legislative session that university administrators and BOR staff were involved in guiding the testimony of students. We caution the BOR about this matter.**

No response requested.

- 20. With respect to question 19, the BOR staff response appears to indicate that no effort is made to promote intellectual diversity on campus within the work of hiring committees. Is this correct? If so, what instructions to hiring committees will the BOR implement to place a premium on the promotion of intellectual diversity on campus?**

Our Human Resource Offices provide assistance throughout the hiring process to ensure that all applicants receive equal opportunity, limited only by each individual's knowledge, skills, and abilities, and their alignment with the duties and expectations of the position. The one exception to this is for veterans, SDCL Chapter 3-3 requires that preference be given to qualified veterans and their spouses in appointment, employment and promotion. The BOR and its institutions understand and apply intellectual diversity in a comprehensive and multidimensional manner. Educational environments are characterized by the spirit of free inquiry, which requires the right to examine, question, modify, uphold or reject traditional, new or emerging ideas and beliefs. Maintaining the freedom to reason and dispute on the basis of observation and study are necessary to the advancement of knowledge. It is paramount that our universities maintain an environment that is conducive to speculation, experiment and creation. Our institutions strive to hire faculty and staff that will embody, foster and promote this type of learning environment.

Sincerely,



Paul B. Beran
Executive Director & CEO
South Dakota Board of Regents

cc: Kevin Schieffer
Nathan Lukkes
Representative Lee Qualm
Representative Steven Haugaard
Senator Brock Greenfield
Senator Jim Bolin