

**President Jim Johnsen
University of Alaska System
ua.president@alaska.edu**

**University of Alaska Board of Regents
c/o Board of Regents Chair, Sheri Buretta
ua-bor@alaska.edu**

Dear President Johnsen and the University of Alaska Board of Regents,

As the University of Alaska Southeast (UAS) Sitka Campus Advisory Council, we are committed to supporting UAS and the UAS Sitka Campus in its mission of "student learning enhanced by faculty scholarship, undergraduate research and creative activities, community engagement, and the cultures and environment of Southeast Alaska," and to ensuring that UAS is recognized as a destination of choice for students seeking excellent academic programs and engaging learning opportunities that integrate the environment and cultures of Southeast Alaska.

Much like UAS, the Sitka Campus Advisory Council (SCAC) leads with the values of excellence, diversity, access, collaboration, sustainability, and stewardship, and works to ensure that these values are upheld within the SCAC, at the Sitka Campus, and throughout the whole of the UAS and University of Alaska (UA) systems.

The UAS SCAC has been closely following the discussions leading up the Board of Regents' Amended Transformation Motion to study a structural option involving the merger of UAS and the University of Alaska Fairbanks (UAF), and to produce a conceptual plan by October 15, 2020.

Much like our counterparts on the UAS Juneau Campus Advisory Council, the UAS Sitka Campus Advisory Council shares the concerns expressed in the "Comments on UA Board of Regents Structural Options for UA Transformation that Impact UAS," as well as the concerns and sentiments expressed by the City and Borough of Sitka in their June 3, 2020 letter opposing any options that would eliminate UAS as a separate university within the UA system. You have heard similar concerns from communities throughout Southeast Alaska, and from the many individuals and organizations with whom UAS and the UAS Sitka Campus partner to make it the exceptional university and economic driver that it represents for our region and state.

It thus came as a disappointment to see the concerns of Southeast Alaska communities seemingly ignored and rejected when the motion to explore a structural option passed on a vote of 7 to 4 at the June 4, 2020 UA Board of Regents meeting.

As we understand it, the UA Board of Regents has subsequently stressed that the motion was made not to eliminate UAS, but rather to look for opportunities to strengthen and enhance the UA system in Southeast Alaska.

As representatives of the UAS Sitka Campus, its many community partners, and the community of Sitka as a whole, we are requesting that the UA Board of Regents include the UAS SCAC in the entire process of exploring UA structural options. We are requesting involvement in the study and conceptual planning outlined in the Amended Transformation Motion of June 4, 2020, as well as any subsequent discussions and decision making that affect UAS and the UAS Sitka Campus.

As the UAS SCAC, we hope to be actively and equitably involved in exploring the many options that we believe can meet the UA Board of Regents' larger goals for the UA system, and we are committed to working with the UA Board of Regents and other community advisory councils to help determine a future for the UA system and UAS that will ensure access to a high-quality university education in our region through a separately accredited university that has existed for more than 30 years.

Sincerely,

Garry White, Chair
On Behalf of the UAS Sitka Campus Advisory Council

cc:
UA Board of Regents
UAS Sitka Campus Advisory Council