

November 3, 2010

Dr. Jack A. Andonie  
1204 Transcontinental Dr.  
Metairie, LA 70001

Dear Dr. Andonie,

As a member of the New Orleans business community, I am writing to express my concern about the proposed \$1.56 million midyear cut for the University of New Orleans. Due to a state revenue shortfall of \$108 million, UNO was notified by the Division of Administration that its midyear budget would be reduced by \$687,586. UNO has recently received additional information that the LSU System has increased UNO's cut to \$1.56 million in order to reduce proposed reductions to the Pennington Research Center and the LSU Ag Center. This means that this midyear reduction for UNO will translate into a full year budget reduction that exceeds \$3.0 million. This reduction on top of previous operating budget reductions and in anticipation of additional cuts in 2011 is simply more than the university can stand and continue its ability to hold true to its mission to serve the state of Louisiana as a major four year research university.

**As the Chief Financial Officer and Senior Executive Vice President of Stewart Enterprises,** I know firsthand the vital role the University of New Orleans plays for the Greater New Orleans area. With an economic impact of more than \$1.0 billion, UNO serves as the backbone of the Greater New Orleans economy providing an educated workforce for my company and many others. UNO ranks first as the most diverse campus in the state and first in the percentage of master's and doctoral students. In addition, UNO's faculty is the highest performing in the state ranking first in research awards per faculty member.

I clearly understand that in difficult economic times, tough choices must be made. Earlier this year, the state set a clear mandate for our institutions of education through the passage of the GRAD Act. The GRAD Act mandates our state universities must improve graduation rates and other productivity measures and the University of New Orleans is committed to comply with the GRAD Act requirements.

While the contribution of research centers such as the LSU Ag Center and the Pennington Research Center are important, I do not support a shift of the burden of \$7.3 million from those research

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centers to the core mission of our state's universities which is to provide an educated workforce. As a business leader, I urge to you adhere to that goal and to support the original midyear cut of \$687,000. The impact of even a cut at that level will be very difficult for UNO, as it has endured many challenges far beyond most campuses in recent years. I also know that even a midyear cut of \$687,000 will be multiplied as it becomes an annualized, permanent budget reduction of \$1,374,000.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

**Thomas M. Kitchen**