

A Statement of Support

Whereas:

1. Public higher education has been and continues to be a key part of the state of North Carolina's economic, social, and educational development.
2. The General Assembly has created, for the purposes of equity and fairness, a system of public universities known collectively as the "University of North Carolina system", with a president and a Board of Governors appointed by the legislature to oversee the governance of the system.
3. The UNC system allows a forum for each campus to share its financial and programmatic needs, and for these needs to be duly shared with the state legislature.
4. The introduction of private political action committees (PACs), aligned with individual campuses of the system, but acting outside the framework designated by the legislature, threatens irreparable harm to the UNC system of governance.

I, as a member of the North Carolina State Legislature, call on the University of North Carolina General Administration, the UNC Board of Governors (BOG), and individual campuses to break the connection between PACs and campuses in the UNC system. As a first step, the BOG should do the following:

1. Label PACs aligned with individual UNC system campuses as unhelpful to the aims of public higher education in North Carolina and potentially harmful to UNC system governance. The BOG should further recommend that campuses of the UNC system not form PACs for the purpose of seeking political action from the government of North Carolina.
2. Bar members of the Board of Governors, who serve as advisors to and advocates for all of the campuses of the UNC system, from providing donations, either financial or in-kind, to political action committees (PACs) aligned with individual campuses in the UNC system. Such contributions should be regarded as conflicts-of-interest that are also harmful to UNC system governance.

_____ I support this statement and urge the Board of Governors to take concrete action to address this problem.

_____ I support part of this statement (specify: action (1) or action (2) by the BOG).

Lawmaker Name:

Office Number:

Signees (as of March 13, 2007):

1. Rep. Marvin Lucas (Cumberland)
2. Sen. Larry Shaw (Cumberland)
3. Rep. Susan Fisher (Buncombe)
4. Sen. Martin Nesbitt (Buncombe)
5. Rep. Larry Hall (Durham)
6. Rep. Paul Luebke (Durham)
7. Rep. Mickey Michaux (Durham)
8. Rep. Ty Harrell (Wake)
9. Sen. Edward Jones (Halifax)
10. Rep. George Cleveland (Onslow)
11. Rep. Larry Brown (Forsyth)
12. Rep. Larry Womble (Forsyth)
13. Rep. Jean Farmer-Butterfield (Edgecombe)
14. Rep. Pricey Harrison (Guilford)

Senator Ellie Kinnaird (Orange) wrote her own letter of support.