



Robert L. Barchi, President

September 27, 2018

Ms. Mary Mickelsen  
Executive Secretary University Senate  
Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey  
ASB III, Suite 110  
Cook/Douglass Campus

Dear Ms. Mickelson:

Please convey my thanks to the members of the Student Affairs Committee for their review of University Senate Charge S-1616, Absentee Ballots in Special Student Organization Funding, and for their recommendations to allow for off-campus, evening-only, and online students to vote in these special elections via mail-in ballot.

The submitted resolution includes a recommendation for students to have the option to mail in ballots for referendum elections. The primary concern with this recommendation is ensuring the appropriate controls are in place to maintain the integrity and accuracy of the election process and results. Currently, referendum elections are time-consuming and difficult due to the paper-and-pencil process of casting votes. Moreover, University Policy 10.3.3 affords student organizations the ability to send ballots via U.S. mail, provided that this method is used exclusively for all ballots. Combining the use of in-person paper ballots with mailed paper ballots would exacerbate complications that already exist with the paper balloting process, including duplicate votes, lost ballots, ballot transport and storage, counting and tabulation oversight, etc.

To address these issues and advance our strategic goal of transforming the student experience, I am asking the vice chancellors for student affairs on each campus to work with the Office of Information Technology and other appropriate parties to explore the possibility of implementing online voting, and to conduct a review and update of Policy 10.3.3 - Policy on Special Student Organization Funding. As part of that policy review, I am instructing them to address the in-person paper balloting provision, update language, specify terms, clarify timeframes and streamline procedures with a goal of making them less difficult for students to understand.

I do appreciate the committee raising these concerns and agree that change is needed.

Sincerely,

Robert Barchi

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- c: Nancy Cantor, Chancellor, Rutgers University–Newark
- Mary Beth Daisey, Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs, Rutgers University–Camden
- Phoebe Haddon, Chancellor, Rutgers University–Camden
- Susan Hamilton, Assistant Vice Chancellor for Academic and Student Affairs, RBHS
- Salvador Mena, Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs, Rutgers University–New Brunswick
- Christopher Molloy, Interim Chancellor, Rutgers University–New Brunswick
- Michele Norin, Senior Vice President and Chief Information Officer
- Brian Strom, Chancellor, Rutgers Biomedical and Health Sciences, and Executive Vice  
President for Health Affairs
- Corlisse Thomas, Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs, Rutgers University–Newark