

July 9, 2023

President Holloway,

As we assume you know, Senate Chair Simonds received several lengthy documents concerning the medical schools' merger from Chancellor Strom via email at 5:27pm on Friday, July 7. These appear to be in response to concerns and a request for further information posed in the Resolution in response to Charge S-2303 approved by the Senate on April 28. The documents from Chancellor Strom were then distributed by email to all Senators by Secretary Vicki Hewitt at 6:28pm July 7.

We want to be clear that these materials do not change the Vote Postponement Resolution passed by the Senate EC in an emergency meeting the morning of July 7. As noted in it, University policy 50.2.2 states and longstanding Senate practice affirms that Senate endorsement is required for a proposal on the order of a multi-unit merger.

Moreover, even section B of policy 50.2.2 – applying to other domains of advisory authority of the Senate – makes clear that Chancellor Strom's efforts late yesterday are insufficient for compliance in any interpretation of the policy:

*“The President of the University shall act on such matters only after having received the advice of the Senate or after giving the Senate a reasonable time in which to present its views.”*

There is no plausible argument that the Senate, waiting since April 28 for a response from Chancellor Strom, now out of session for the summer, and receiving these new documents after business hours on a Friday before a Monday meeting, has had any – let alone sufficient – time to review the information to generate appropriate advice let alone endorsement. We thus strongly contest Chancellor Strom's claims in his email to Chair Simonds yesterday evening that his late materials were sent “in the spirit of shared governance,” and that he has in any way meaningfully “taken into account the Senate's concerns.”

Proceeding on Monday with a Board of Governors vote on an incomplete proposal for a merger of Rutgers' medical schools is a violation of University policy, and also of norms, precedent and practice of shared governance that have been established at Rutgers for decades. We therefore urge you once again to protect shared governance at Rutgers by requesting that the Board of Governors postpone the scheduled Monday vote on the merger.

Sincerely,

The Senate Executive Committee