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Assembly California Legislature



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VICE CHAIR: JOBS, ECONOMIC
DEVELOPMENT, AND THE ECONOMY
NATURAL RESOURCES
HUMAN SERVICES
LOCAL GOVERNMENT

August 16, 2010

Chancellor Gene D. Block
Executive Vice Chancellor and Provost Scott Waugh
University of California
2147 Murphy Hall
Los Angeles, CA 90095-1405

Dear Chancellor Block and Provost Waugh:

We are writing you as members of the California State Legislature regarding a serious personnel matter. We have learned from an August 15, 2010, Bakersfield Californian newspaper column, "Independent thought not wanted at UCLA," and other sources that Dr. James E. Enstrom of the UCLA Department of Environmental Health Sciences will be dismissed from his faculty position after August 30, 2010. Based on our understanding of the situation, he has not been given valid justification for the termination of his 34-year exemplary academic career at the UCLA School of Public Health. It appears to us that he is being dismissed in order to silence his scientific views on the health effects of fine particulate air pollution. In particular, we are concerned that he is being deprived of his academic freedom as a UCLA faculty member to speak out against draconian diesel vehicle regulations approved by the California Air Resources Board in 2007 and 2008. Because of their adverse economic impact on the California trucking and construction industries, 52 legislators signed a September 9, 2009, letter to CARB requesting that these diesel regulations be suspended. Based on findings presented at a February 26, 2006, CARB symposium in Sacramento, we understand that there is now extensive evidence supporting Dr. Enstrom's contention that diesel particulate matter does not kill Californians and that there is little or no public health justification for the CARB diesel regulations.

We want to be assured that proper procedures have been followed by UCLA regarding the dismissal of Dr. Enstrom and we want to be assured that he will be given the full rights accorded him in the UCLA Academic Personnel Manual to appeal his dismissal. To ensure that his appeal is given proper consideration, we request that he be allowed to retain his current faculty position until his appeal has been fully evaluated. If Dr. Enstrom is dismissed before his appeal has been fully evaluated, we plan to promptly hold a hearing in Sacramento on this matter. In particular, we will allow Dr. Enstrom and others the opportunity to present evidence regarding academic freedom and scientific integrity at UCLA, particularly regarding the circumstances surrounding his dismissal.

Thank you very much for your attention to this important matter.

Sincerely yours,

Undersigned Legislators

Signature

Printed Name

Dan Logue

DAN LOGUE

Bill Berryhill

Bill Berryhill

Jim Nielsen

Jim Nielsen

Kevin Jeffries

Kevin Jeffries

Danny D. Gilmore

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Jeff Miller

Signature

Printed Name

Ted Gaines

Ted Gaines