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April 26, 2016

Senator Ben Allen

Chair, Senate Elections and Constitutional Amendments Committee

State Capitol, Room 2203

Sacramento, CA 95814

Re: SCA 1 (Lara), As Amended on March 10, 2016

Pending in the Senate Elections and Constitutional Amendments Committee

Position: OPPOSE

On behalf of the University of California, I write to express opposition to SCA 1 (Lara), which would place before the voters a measure to reduce the terms of UC Regents from 12 years to four years and cap total years of service at 16 years. Specifically, this measure proposes the following:

- Regents appointed for terms beginning on or after March 1, 2017, would serve a four-year term.
- Beginning November 9, 2016, an individual would be prohibited from being appointed for a term that would result in that person serving a total of more than 16 years as a Regent, exclusive of service as a student or faculty Regent.
- A Regent appointed before November 9, 2016, who as of January 1, 2017, has served for 15 or more years, could serve until the expiration of their term or January 1, 2018, whichever is first.
- A Regent appointed before November 9, 2016, who as of January 1, 2017, has served more than four but less than 15 years may serve until the expiration of their term or their total years of service reaches 16 years, whichever is first.

The University of California is widely recognized as the finest public research system in the world, and much of this success lies with the continuity and expertise of the governing board. The existing terms provide Regents the time to develop an understanding of UC's vast policy and operational landscape, including its 10 campuses, five medical centers, and three national laboratories. A full 12-year term allows Regents to become expert in many of the complex academic, research, medical and operational issues that the Board must consider. The length of the term also contributes to greater Regental oversight of UC operations and effective stewardship of UC's \$26 billion enterprise. Longer terms allow Regents to develop institutional memory to provide effective guidance, to see issues and projects to completion, and to hold administrators accountable for results.

Accordingly, we are concerned that four-year terms will limit board effectiveness because Regents will not have the time to develop sufficient understanding of UC's complexities and to provide important oversight that has enabled the University of California to become the premier public research

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institution in the world. Further, shorter terms may heighten politicization of the Board. Longer terms, which are staggered over time, ensure a greater blending of board members whose appointment was put forward by different governors and confirmed by different sets of legislators. The staggering of Regental terms beyond that of a single Governor, and preclusion of frequent reappointments, helps ensure that Regents are more likely to act independently when making decisions that impact the University, its students, and ultimately the state – which is the rationale that originally motivated enshrining the extended terms in the Constitution. SCA 1 would eviscerate this protection.

In closing, I am particularly concerned about the immediate impact that SCA 1 would have on the current Board of Regents. SCA 1 would reduce the gender and ethnic diversity of the Board by cutting short the terms of Regent Sherry Lansing and the current Chair, Regent Monica Lozano, through no fault of their own. These accomplished women have both served as Board leaders and were overwhelmingly confirmed by the Senate in recent years.

While longer terms provided in the Constitution are important to limiting politicization of the board, the Regents have indicated that more direct engagement with the Legislature would help them as they guide the University. As such, the Regents are open to the development of an ongoing consultation process with the Legislature that would ensure a recurring dialogue to discuss important educational issues for the State.

Thank you for your consideration of our views. Please feel free to call me at 510-587-6050 if I can answer questions or provide additional information.

Sincerely,



Nelson Peacock

cc: Senator Ricardo Lara
Vice Chair and Members, Senate Elections and Constitutional Amendments Committee
President Janet Napolitano
University of California Board of Regents
Executive Vice President & CFO Nathan Brostrom
Associate Vice President Steve Juarez