

Dear Senators and Representatives,

The United Academics (UNAC) would like to thank Representatives Josephson and Wool for putting forward House bills that would create a seat for a faculty regent on the University of Alaska Board of Regents. UNAC is the largest union at the University of Alaska, representing over 1,100 full-time faculty at UAF, UAA, UAS and Extended Campuses. The Representative Assembly of UNAC, which is composed of 29 elected union members from across the University of Alaska system, has voted unanimously to endorse HB195, introduced by Representative Josephson.

Introducing a faculty regent onto the Board of Regents would follow national trends and indicate a commitment to shared governance at the University of Alaska as mandated by the Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities (NWCCU). Faculty have an in-depth understanding of academic programs, teaching and research, and a faculty regent will provide valuable information to the Board of Regents as they steer the university through a decreasing budget. This modification will ensure that decisions are made with a more comprehensive understanding of their impact on students, staff, faculty, and the local community.

A particular aspect of HB195 that we support is the two-year term for the faculty regent. Longer terms would likely interfere with teaching and research assignments of the faculty regent. We also support the requirement for a majority vote for passage of policy as dictated by HB195. Requiring 7 votes out of 12 to pass policy would ensure that major decisions were made with a general consensus. Finally, we would like to suggest that the faculty regent be chosen in rotation from UAF, UAA, UAS and Extended Campuses to ensure balanced representation from the campuses. Ideally, the list of nominated faculty members to be sent to the Governor would be chosen by the Faculty Alliance, which represents faculty from across the University of Alaska system.

Again, we would like to thank the representatives for introducing this bill and the Alaska Legislature for realizing the importance of shared governance as the University of Alaska works to meet the needs of Alaskans.

Sincerely,

Members of the UNAC Representative Assembly

Abel Bult-Ito (President, UAF)

Mara Bacsujlaky (Vice President, UAF)

Charla Brown (Vice President, UAS)

Richard McDonald (Vice President,
Extended Campuses)

Sharon Chamard (Vice President, UAA)

Max Kullberg (UAA)

Kate Quick (UAF)

Terry Nelson (UAA)

Anthony Rickard (UAF)

Jody Drew (Kuskokwim Campus, UAF)

Erik Carlson (UAA)

Robert Coker (UAF)

Peter Bieniek (UAF)

Peter Praetorius (Mat-Su campus, UAA)

Gordon Williams (UAF)

Lisa Hoferkamp (UAS)

