

We, the undersigned, faculty, staff and students at the University of Massachusetts Boston, wish to thank Mayor M. Walsh for his recent public comments affirming the critical importance of UMass Boston to our city and the Commonwealth. These comments, as well as coverage in the *Boston Globe* by Joan Vennoch, Shirley Leung, and Laura Krantz, focus needed attention on the potential damage to the campus from the acquisition of Mount Ida by UMass Amherst. We are Boston's only public research university. As the *Boston Globe's* recent editorial stated "...it is time to stop talking about [UMass Boston's] huge potential as an urban institution of higher learning and do what it takes to make it happen." The Mount Ida deal stands in the way of progress. As Richard Freeland, former Massachusetts Commissioner of Higher Education, accurately asserted, the proposed acquisition of one struggling campus (Mount Ida) would have a devastating impact on ours. It would certainly lead to the cannibalization of enrollments at UMass Boston. We thank the *Boston Globe* and Commissioner Freeland for their statements of concern in the most serious terms and for their stand on behalf of the people of Boston.

Past concerns about lack of support from the UMass President's Office, the Board of Trustees, and other decision-makers whose voices should have championed our campus are only exacerbated by the impulsivity of this purchase, which demonstrates little regard for process, planning, and input from our community. UMass Boston is a formidable institution, and one of Boston's most invaluable assets. Its future is crucial to the wellbeing of our City and the Commonwealth. We enthusiastically welcome the participation of the Mayor of Boston in matters pertaining to the future of the City's public university.

We demand the respect we have earned. We also demand that, moving forward, the perspectives of UMass Boston faculty, staff, and students who are committed to the campus' long-standing values and mission be central in all discussions

bearing on our campus. We are not going to sit idly by while forces in the Commonwealth play fast and loose with the future of our beloved institution.

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