

# MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY

February 7, 2018

To the Michigan State University Board of Trustees:

As the representatives of James Madison College, Lyman Briggs College, and Residential College in the Arts and Humanities, we strive to promote the mission of the residential college experience at Michigan State University: to create an inclusive, living-learning environment within a major research university, to foster collaboration between students, faculty, and staff, to advance scholarship, to teach innovation, and to promote community engagement. However, we feel our ability to promote this mission has been threatened due to recent actions taken by the Michigan State University Board of Trustees. The actions of the Board have tarnished the reputation and prestige of this University, and have left the MSU community devastated.

The Board has consistently demonstrated callous disregard for the concerns and needs of sexual assault survivors. Despite their statement on January 26, 2018, where the Board assured the MSU community that they would be “united in [their] determination to take all necessary steps to begin a new day and to change the environment at the university,” the Board has acted with indifference. They have ignored the requests and advice of the Deans of the seventeen colleges at MSU, the Faculty Senate, Faculty Steering Committee, and student leadership in the heedless appointment of the interim president, John Engler. In doing so, the Board has explicitly neglected their responsibilities as outlined in the constitution of the State of Michigan:



To nurture an institution that is ever responsive to the needs of a dynamic and complex society [...] and that disseminates information to promote the well-being and development of the people of the state, nation and world.



Thus, as student leaders representing James Madison College, Lyman Briggs College, and the Residential College in the Arts and Humanities, we express this statement of No Confidence in the Board of Trustees' current ability, as publicly elected officials, to effectively serve the students of the aforementioned residential colleges.



We stand ready to support the faculty vote of No Confidence regarding the immediate resignation of the Board of Trustees and Interim President. To regain our Confidence, we demand a Board of Trustees that is accountable, transparent, and demonstrative of compassionate leadership in working with the students, faculty, and staff of not only the three residential colleges on campus, but with the MSU community at-large.

Additionally, we second the call for student and faculty representation on the Board of Trustees. We demand the Board of Trustees provide ample opportunities for students and faculty to provide feedback to the Board during the appointment processes of an Interim and permanent President, and that the feedback provided by these individuals be substantially considered before any decision is made.

Most importantly, we voice support for survivors of sexual assault and harassment who have been ignored and disregarded amidst the Larry Nassar case as well as historically on our campus. We are moving to foster a culture where the voices of survivors are heard and valued, and we are actively molding a culture in which each and every student feels safe and respected at Michigan State University. In moving toward these demands and goals, we will truly “begin a new day.”

Respectfully,

James Madison College Student Senate

Lyman Briggs Student Advisory Council

Residential College in the Arts and Humanities Council