



UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS  
Urbana-Champaign • Chicago • Springfield

**Christopher G. Kennedy**  
*Chair of the Board of Trustees*

MMPI  
222 Merchandise Mart Plaza, Suite 470  
Chicago, IL 60654

January 26, 2010

Mr. Robert Naiman  
Jobs with Justice  
802 E. California  
Urbana Illinois 61801

Dear Mr. Naiman:

Thank you for taking the time to share your thoughts related to the Graduate Employees Organization (GEO) with my colleagues on the Board of Trustees and me. I have a great respect for the GEO and understand its members play an important role at the University.

We considered your comments carefully while engaging ourselves in complicated contract talks, and we shared your input with key negotiators.

Perhaps the greatest accomplishment here was the fact that the Board played its role as steward of the University but not as a day-to-day leader. We set parameters with the negotiating parties and provided overall guidance to the University administration, expressed in terms of a range of our tolerance for certain changes, but the Board stayed out of day-to-day negotiations and did not become mired, publicly or privately, in the discussion.

While I intend to be the chairman of the University of Illinois Board of Trustees, I am not the executive chairman. I do not intend to run the University on a day-to-day basis.

Also, I want to thank those members of the GEO who attended the Board meeting on November 12, 2009, and met with me as well as others. The concerns expressed at that time were heard and considered. I especially thank those who attended the Board meeting for their attention during the meeting and courtesy.

Sincerely,

Christopher G. Kennedy