

**Rhode Island Board of Governors
for Higher Education**
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December 31, 2008



Dr. Patricia J. Morokoff
Chair
Psychology Department
University of Rhode Island
Chafee 413
Kingston, RI 02881

Dear Dr. Morokoff:

I wanted to take the opportunity to commend you, along with your co-author, Professor Emeritus Jerome A. Schaffran, for the opinion piece you published in the Providence Journal on December 25th.

Many of your arguments were quite familiar to me since I have been making most of them for some time now. It was quite uplifting to see other voices offer similar thoughts and rationale. There is no question that further cuts to the public higher education budget will adversely affect the University and force URI to consider accepting more out-of-state students while enrolling fewer Rhode Islanders.

Your arguments that higher education has public as well as private benefits also rang true, and underscored a prime reason why the state should be investing more in higher education, not cutting back.

There is no getting around the fact that we need to look at doing things differently in this economic climate and in light of the state's fiscal crisis. The Board of Governors is, in fact, looking at a number of ways to make our system of higher education more effective and efficient. But putting a severe crimp in the pipeline of one of the state's few economic engines is not something that should be part of state strategy at this point in time.

The University is a beacon for the future of our state. Let's continue to urge our elected officials to realize this as they consider the task at hand when they return in January.

Again, thank you for taking the time to write and submit this well-written piece.

Sincerely,

Jack R. Warner

Commissioner of Higher Education

Cc: Jerome A. Schaffran, Celest Martin, Tom Ahrens, Gary Kulberg