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September 14, 2015

VIA EMAIL AND REGULAR MAIL

Dawood Farahi, Ph.D.
Members of the Board of Trustees
Kean University
1000 Morris Ave, Union, NJ 07083

Dear Dr. Farahi and Members of the Board:

I write to express my great concern about the pending layoffs of professional staff employees that is slated to be announced by Kean University in the coming days. One of the criticisms that is most frequently expressed to me by students, faculty, administration and alumnae in my capacity as Chair of the Assembly Higher Education Committee is lack of adequate professional staff in our public colleges and universities. It frankly ranks alongside student debt, because lack of access to academic support and student support services results in myriad problems that affect students intellectually and financially.

At a time when tuition has skyrocketed – I understand Kean raised its tuition 3% this year - and students genuinely struggle to attend Kean, denying the most needy students the access to the very employees who are responsible for every facet of learning and support outside the classroom seems not just unconscionable, but contrary to common sense and damaging to Kean's particular mission.

I genuinely understand that state aid has been stagnant, but my research indicates that in addition to Kean's healthy surplus, no other institution of higher education in the state is threatening layoffs other than yours.

These dedicated and hard-working professionals are an invaluable asset to the University and to the students they so ably serve. They are integral to a successful academic environment and their dedication and expertise should be celebrated. Instead, they and their families face financial hardship during times that are still difficult here in New Jersey.

Dr. Dawood Farahi
Members of the Kean University Board of Trustees
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I urge you in the strongest possible terms to rescind your threatened layoffs of Kean University's professional staff and instead find cost saving measures and alternatives that will neither raise tuition nor deprive Kean's students of professional staff who improve the quality of their academic experience in so many ways.

Thank you for your consideration.

Very truly yours,


MILA M. JASEY

Assemblywoman – District 27

C: Hon. Vincent Prieto, Speaker, NJ General Assembly