



STATE OF TENNESSEE

PHIL BREDESEN
GOVERNOR

May 4, 2009

Tennessee University Faculty Senates (TUFS) Executive Committee
c/o John Nolt, President
Department of Philosophy
801 McClung Tower
University of Tennessee
Knoxville, Tennessee 37996-0480

Dear President Nolt and Members of the TUFS Executive Committee:

Thank you very much for your letter of April 20, 2009, concerning the future and structure of public higher education in Tennessee. Governor Bredesen has asked me to respond on his behalf.

As you note in your letter, it is critical to the future of the state of Tennessee that we successfully meet the challenges that are faced by higher education in Tennessee. Your willingness to take part in this important discussion is greatly appreciated, and indeed will be critical to the process.

At this time, it is not envisioned that a commission or similar task force will be created. Over ten years ago, a commission undertook a review of higher education in Tennessee, both in terms of mission and structure. The results of that effort remain relevant to our current circumstances.

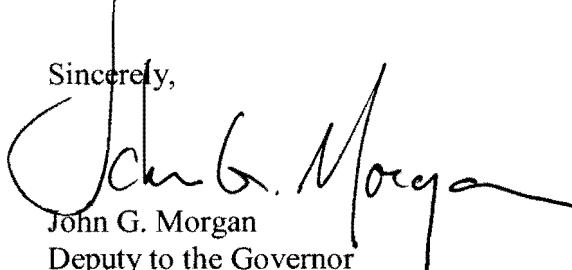
Over the coming months, though, the Governor and key legislative leaders will be conducting a continuing dialogue. The focus of this conversation will be identifying the role(s) that public higher education should play in fulfilling the public agenda in Tennessee. Once those roles are identified, the discussion will turn to structure, i.e., how should the public higher education enterprise in Tennessee be organized in order to best fulfill the State's needs.

Throughout this process, the input from all relevant interests will be sought and thoughtfully considered. Your input, and those you represent, will be critical to our success.

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If you have any further questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,

John G. Morgan
Deputy to the Governor

JGM:jhc

cc: Jeffrey Berman, Ph.D., President-Elect (University of Memphis)
Timothy F. Winters, Ph.D., Past-President (Austin Peay State University)
H. Lyn Miles, Ph.D., Secretary (University of Tennessee, Chattanooga)
Jan Simek, Interim President, University of Tennessee
Charles Manning, Chancellor, Tennessee Board of Regents
Senator Dolores Gresham, Chair, Senate Education Committee
Senator Andy Berke (SB 2025 Sponsor)
Representative Mark L. Maddox (HB 1943 Sponsor)