Dear Gary:

I am writing you today on behalf of the Association of Tennessee University Faculty Senates (TUFS), an association representing the faculty senates of the 10 four-year public universities in the state of Tennessee (Austin Peay State University, East Tennessee State University, Middle Tennessee State University, Tennessee State University, Tennessee Technological University, University of Memphis, University of Tennessee-Chattanooga, University of Tennessee Health Science Center, University of Tennessee-Knoxville, and University of Tennessee-Martin). Our association is seeking the advice and guidance of AAUP concerning the exclusion of faculty representation in the recently completed search for a new chancellor of the Tennessee Board of Regents (TBR), one of the two governing systems for public higher education institutions in the state.

At the August 2010 meeting of our association held in Chattanooga, Tennessee, there was considerable discussion concerning the absence of faculty representatives on the search committee for the new chancellor, especially given repeated requests for some form of faculty representation on the search committee by the TBR Faculty Subcouncil, the policy-making group of TBR comprised of faculty representing the 19 university and community college campuses of the TBR system. In particular, questions were raised about how the exclusion of faculty representatives from the search committee accords with AAUP concepts of the shared governance of universities and whether this aspect of the chancellor search was inconsistent with national practices of systems of higher education in other states across the country. Based on the discussion, a motion was approved at the meeting, and subsequently ratified by 9 of the 10 member senates, that TUFS “should contact the national office of the AAUP regarding the procedures used in the selection of the TBR chancellor and for possible investigation and evaluation.”

I should note that concerns about the chancellor search have already been raised. For example, in August, H. Colman “Coley” McGinnis, President and Director of Government Relations of the Tennessee Conference of AAUP, wrote to the AAUP
national office expressing concerns about the search process. More recently, at the end of last month, the Tennessee Senate Education Committee held hearings concerning the chancellor search and, during these hearings, documentation emerged indicating that the chair of the chancellor search committee intentionally excluded faculty representatives from the committee and it was highlighted that the range of candidates considered was not extensive, especially considering that TBR is one of the nation’s larger higher education systems. These hearings were chronicled by media in Tennessee, such as this September 29 article in *The Tennessean*: <http://tinyurl.com/2ddupbj>.

As I learned when attending your organization’s Summer Institute, AAUP is committed to the concept of shared academic governance, in which university faculty, administrators, and governing board members work cooperatively to manage the complex set of activities of colleges and universities. And I know from my conversations with you that you certainly share this commitment. Our association therefore looks forward to your response and the advice and assistance of AAUP in this matter.

My best wishes.

Sincerely,

[Signature]

Jeffrey S. Berman, President
Tennessee University Faculty Senates
Professor of Psychology
University of Memphis
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TUFS Executive Committee

J. A. M. “Toby” Boulet (U. of Tennessee-Knoxville), President-Elect
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