

An Open Letter to the Associated Students of Colorado State University from the Board of Governors of the Colorado State University System

As the statutorily appointed governing board of Colorado State University, we believe that a strong and collaborative system of shared governance serves our constituents and the University well. The faculty and student representatives to the Board of Governors contribute in substantive ways to the Board's leadership of the institutions they represent, and their voices are a critical and valued part of our decision making and strategic planning. The involvement of these representatives begins early in the summer of their appointment year, and their ability to function effectively in these roles grows from the relationships, training, and meetings that happen throughout the course of an entire year of Board membership. We want to recognize Josh Silva for representing the students of CSU on the Board of Governors since last summer and to thank him for his participation and service.

With this perspective, we wanted to write to you about the recent developments in the leadership of ASCSU. We respect student government and its role, and we understand that you have gone through a challenging time. In removing the ASCSU president from office, you have also disrupted your representation at the governing board level, and we are disappointed that you were unable to resolve differences without resorting to the most extreme measures at your disposal. The removal of a president elected by the students departs from the traditional norms of civil governance, and we believe such a step should only be undertaken when other avenues have been exhausted and with full respect for the gravity of such action. There must be room in all representative bodies for disagreement, opposing views, and diversity of personalities, thought, and perspectives. In student government, in particular, we believe there should be opportunity and time allowed for growth, development, and learning from one another in a climate of respect, dignity, and collegiality, with issues and disagreements addressed proactively through normal, collaborative, university processes. We are aware that the ASCSU processes are under review with possible constitution changes and we look forward to a report from the University President on any revisions that are being considered, per Board policy.

We hope you will use this opportunity to look deeply and self-reflectively on the processes and approaches taken and your participation in them. We also hope that your focus will now be centered on how to continue to represent the students who have elected you to office – and whose voice you represent at the Board level through the ASCSU president.

To all the students of Colorado State University: We hope you will consider the dynamics and responsibilities of student government and take an active role in leading and shaping your government, as a body that speaks for you at the highest levels of university leadership.

We wish you the best as you move forward under new leadership, and we look forward to working with and getting to know your new president in the remaining months of this year.