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## A LETTER TO PREMIER REDFORD AND OUR FELLOW CITIZENS OF ALBERTA

Dear fellow Albertans,

We are the “public” members of the Board of Governors of the University of Alberta. We are all unpaid volunteers, appointed by the provincial government and unconnected with the U of A, except through our membership on the board.

While we are diverse in background, we share a passion for the U of A and a deep-seated belief that the U of A – already a leading university in Canada – is well on its way to being a top global public university. Achieving that goal is our common vision – not only for the university, but also for our province, which also seeks to be more globally connected. Our commitment to the university comes in part from our knowledge that the U of A makes a huge contribution to the quality of life we have in this province as well as to our economic prosperity.

Consider this: Each day, the U of A has a positive impact on communities throughout this province. Eighty per cent of our 250,000 alumni are right here in Alberta, and every day they are providing us with health services, teaching our children, running our businesses; they are leaders in government, in industry, in the legal system. They are entrepreneurs and innovative thinkers who are charting our economic, social, and cultural futures. Our researchers developed the Edmonton Protocol treatment for diabetes; they are solving the challenges of the oilsands. In short, this U of A community of some 50,000 students and staff members is connected to the communities we serve in ways that are making a difference.

For these and other reasons, we must go on the record as being deeply concerned that the recent budget decision of the provincial government to cut the university’s funding by more than seven per cent will have a dramatic effect on the progress that the U of A has made in reaching its potential, both as a research and a teaching institution.

It is difficult to imagine the detrimental effect that cutting more than \$43 million from our annual budget this year alone will have on our students, who are the critical next generation in this province. The same is true of our faculty, who lead the teaching and research initiatives that can help position this province as a global leader on the issues of greatest concern in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Staff members at our university who support our students and faculty also will be deeply affected.

We are aware of the comments made about inefficiencies at the U of A and elsewhere in the post-secondary sector. As governors, we can assure you that we hold our institution accountable for efficient, effective practices. Certainly there is always room for improvement, but part of our job as

governors is to monitor and approve the university's budget and we are satisfied that the U of A is run efficiently.

We are concerned that this great institution to which we willingly give our time and resources will be set back many years by the cuts that will have to be made to absorb the decrease in our provincial funding. Being just another "average" university is not something that is part of our vision, nor is it something that we can accept.

We agree wholeheartedly with the provincial government's goal of making Alberta's post-secondary system as effective as possible. We are committed to working with the government to find ways to do that, recognizing that this may mean the University of Alberta looks quite different in the future. As long as our university and other post-secondary institutions in the province are serving the needs of Albertans – now and in the future – and as long as all of us emerge stronger, we can move forward together.

Douglas Goss, Chair  
Don Fleming  
Jim Hole  
Agnes Hoveland  
Shenaz Jeraj  
Don Matthew  
Ove Minsos  
Jerry Naqvi  
Bernd Reuscher  
Robert Teskey  
Dick Wilson  
Ralph Young