

Good afternoon, thank you for the opportunity to address the Board. I have been an Assistant Professor of Nursing on the tenure track at Rutgers Camden since the fall of 2009. I am here representing the faculty from the newly established School of Nursing in Camden.

As nurses, we are consumer advocates, scientists, teachers, and care providers for persons and families across the lifespan. As one of the most trusted professions, we take pride in our educational values as well as our input into developing and sustaining the science of nursing.

There are several points I'd like to make regarding the potential loss of the Rutgers name and possible merger to become what has been suggested – The University of Southern New Jersey.

- First and foremost, we do not want to lose the **Rutgers name** as it represents a strong flagship, research-based state school. As nurses, we are focused on research as it contributes to the science of evidence-based practice which is strongly supported by our accreditation bodies, the American Nurses Association, the Institute of Medicine, and hospital and nursing specialty organizations. Research is threaded throughout our curriculum and translated at the bedside by our students during clinical rotations and by our graduates upon gaining employment as registered nurses.
- Second, doctorally-prepared nursing faculty seek employment in research institutions. You may not know this but the **nursing faculty shortage** is more critical at this time than the shortage for nurses at the bedside. Numerous qualified students are turned away each year from nursing education programs due to the lack of qualified instructors. If we were to lose our Rutgers name, we would be at a significant disadvantage when attempting to attract qualified candidates for faculty positions in South Jersey. In addition, nursing faculty would not be poised as we are now, to receive federally funded and private grants if we are to become an unrecognized institution.
- Nursing at Rutgers Camden has a strong history of graduating stellar nurses with the majority choosing to stay in south Jersey. **Our enrollments** have the potential to decrease due to a lack of uncertainty of attending a university that is new and has no reputation. We do not want students going over the bridge to obtain a baccalaureate degree in Philadelphia. Our mission is to grow our pre-licensure programs and to create advanced practice nursing models of education including masters and PhD programs that will benefit our citizens in south Jersey.
- The **administrative cost** to merge any schools in south Jersey would be extremely costly and burdensome. Instead we would like to collaborate with others in research and educational endeavors, such as the use of consortium agreements to share resources. We would rather see potential funding be used to strengthen our current resources than be spent on a costly proposed merger of several institutions.
- And finally, we would like to remain true to the university's **mission** focusing on providing education for New Jersey's citizens, conducting cutting edge research, and performing public service. Our civic engagement projects over the last few years have been instrumental in helping the Camden community.

I thank you for your time and hope you consider our points made in this presentation when deciding on our future with Rutgers University.

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