

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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University of California Office of the President

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University of California Academic Senate Chair Robert Powell, a faculty representative on the Board of Regents, made the following statement today (July 12) about the nomination of Secretary of Homeland Security Janet Napolitano for president of the University of California:

“I am extremely pleased that the Regents’ Special Committee to Consider the Selection of a President will recommend that Janet Napolitano be appointed as the next president. Secretary Napolitano has demonstrated an outstanding ability to deal with complex organizations under demanding circumstances. Crucially, she made public higher education a priority during her tenure as governor of Arizona, leading its expansion in a fast-growing state with a diverse population. Her hallmark has been promoting transparency and cutting administrative overhead, two laudable priorities all faculty will appreciate.

“In my discussions with her, Secretary Napolitano clearly articulated the view that the University of California must do all it can to ensure not only that it remains the greatest public university in the world in the 21st century, but also that it moves to new heights. She is ready to use her energy and skills to enhance public support for higher education, recognizing that this commitment involves high stakes and even higher value. She has deep respect for the faculty, and she will listen to what we say. She knows that, as the core of what makes UC great, the faculty must have an environment in which they can thrive as scholars and teachers. And she is ready to engage the many challenges that face us all, such as meeting master plan obligations, promoting our research mission, diversifying our faculty and student body, and insisting on unparalleled academic excellence.

“Secretary Napolitano’s aspirations for UC embody the same lofty ideals that have made our 10-campus university what it is today. Her governing record, moreover, foretells success: She is famously known to work collaboratively, think strategically, and stand firm. Both as governor and as Secretary of Homeland Security, she devoted her initial efforts in office to digging into the details of the budgets. Her fiscal acumen will help lay the foundations for the budgetary planning that will protect our strategic academic goals.

“Secretary Napolitano will be a faithful steward of public higher education who resists disinvestment. She shares our own dedication, as faculty stewards of this institution and its future, to guarantee that the superb educational experience of current students will be available to their children and grandchildren.

“Of course, we, the faculty, must recognize that our new President cannot do her job alone. She clearly has the capacity to understand all of the parts that make up the University of California. We must engage with her, our campus administrations, our political leaders, and the public at large to help her make the case for the future of UC, as well as public higher education in California and the nation. Over the past year, the Senate has worked closely with the Office of

the President to engage our political leaders. I am confident this activity will continue and, with our new president, broaden.

“This appointment comes after a six-month search that deeply involved an Academic Advisory Committee (AAC) consisting of 13 faculty members representing all UC campuses. This committee had three in-person meetings with the Regents Special Committee. The AAC also met over a dozen times as a group, with three in-person meetings. Hundreds of hours were spent shifting through 319 files. All UC faculty owe a great debt to this dedicated group <http://presidentalsearch.universityofcalifornia.edu/academic-advisory-committee.html>.”