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April 8, 2005

President Robert H. Bruininks
Morrill Hall

Dear President Bruininks,

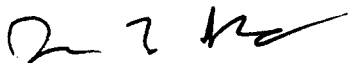
We write to express our strong endorsement of the recommendations of the Academic Task Force on Strategic Positioning. If the University of Minnesota is to become a top tier institution, the university community must be prepared to build and embrace a new, transformational culture. The task force recommendations, although modest in scope, describe a workable plan for beginning to build such a culture.

Should the task force recommendations be accepted by the Board of Regents, the University will begin a long and exciting journey toward increased excellence in research, teaching, and service. Many other changes, some bolder than those described in the task force report, will be necessary, but these will be possible only if we are able to implement the current proposals. The University's leaders will need to emphasize to our community that the task force recommendations are but a beginning. All of us must be prepared to enter an era of change and transformation.

As we move toward implementing the task force recommendations and developing plans for other changes, we urge you to engage and listen to the University's many stakeholders, and to create efficient mechanisms for soliciting, evaluating, and implementing new ideas. We also urge you to ensure that the new implementation task forces include as many faculty as possible, and that these faculty represent a diverse set of views. These task forces will have little time to complete their work, and it is important that you appoint them quickly, before the beginning of the summer recess.

The great universities of the twenty-first century will look very different from those of the last. It is within our power to make the University of Minnesota one of the world's great centers of scholarship, but only if we unlock the creativity and imagination of our whole community. We congratulate you on having the courage to imagine a transformed University of Minnesota. Each of us is prepared to contribute and work with you to help the University realize this beautiful dream.

Sincerely yours,



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c: Members of the Board of Regents
Members of the Academic Task Force on Strategic Positioning