

May 31, 2018

Dear Members of the USC Family,

The past few weeks have been extraordinarily painful for the USC community. I can only imagine how difficult this time must be for those who are reliving their experiences of trauma. Revelations regarding the student health center are causing many of us to examine our priorities and values as a community. As an alum, a father to USC students and a trustee, I share your outrage, your hurt, and your desire for change, and I apologize on behalf of the university.

It is in this spirit that I write to you as the newly elected Chair of the Board of Trustees. I did not seek this position, but I assume this responsibility with humility and resolve. On behalf of the board, I pledge that we will bring accountability, responsible leadership, consistent oversight, and effective and transparent reporting practices to this campus. In the coming days and weeks, you will hear more about the important steps we are taking to repair fundamental flaws and prioritize safety and respect in all aspects of campus life.

Significant changes are necessary and will be made. It is vital that we establish a more robust and active set of checks and balances within the university and have stronger collaborative engagement among the board, the president's office, the Academic Senate, Staff Assembly, the student body and alumni.

Since assuming the chairmanship of the Special Committee of the Board of Trustees, I have spent time listening to faculty, students and administrative leaders across campus. I have heard their concerns and learned first-hand what they feel needs to change. I will continue to listen, and pledge that the board will maintain open constructive dialogue with all stakeholders.

In addition, I want to inform you that the Special Committee of the Board of Trustees has retained O'Melveny & Myers LLP to conduct an independent investigation into improper conduct and reporting failures at the student health center. The investigation will be led by one of the firm's practice chairs, Apalla Chopra. She has vast expertise working with universities in conducting complex and sensitive investigations. She will be joined by her partner, Steve Olson. We commit that this investigation will be independent, comprehensive, expedient and transparent, and our goal is to have it completed by the time students return in the fall.

As well, the Board of Trustees approved the action of the Executive Committee to immediately begin the process of identifying a new world-class president for our university. This will be an orderly, seamless, painstaking and intelligent process. This process will involve select USC constituencies such as the faculty, the administration staff, the student body, alumni, our banking and financial allies and other entities that work with the university regionally, nationally and globally. Our actions will be swift, but we ask for your patience as we manage this complex process and undertake a clear-eyed assessment for USC's immediate future and beyond.

Finally, my fellow trustees and I pledge to hold ourselves to the highest standards as we work to ensure a culture and environment in which safety and transparency are sacrosanct.

For all of these efforts, we are bound and committed to a thorough and inclusive process. I will issue regular updates and keep you informed of key developments and accomplishments. I also sincerely and cordially invite you to share any concerns, questions or comments with the board via e-mail at botchair@usc.edu.

On behalf of the Board of Trustees of the University of Southern California, I thank you for giving us the opportunity to renew and restore your pride in our university. I assure you that we will work tirelessly to make this happen.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Rick J. Caruso". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "R" and "C".

Rick J. Caruso
Chair
USC Board of Trustees