

Statement of Mary Cullinan, President
Southern Oregon University
Delivered at JPR Foundation Board Meeting, Medford, Oregon
March 22, 2012

Thank you all for allowing me the opportunity to speak to you today. As you know, there are challenging issues facing our two organizations. In my view, this board has been asked to make some decisions this afternoon that could take us all irrevocably down a path we do not wish to travel. I appreciate the time today to present a possible alternative to the actions being contemplated by the board.

I want to thank you all for your commitment to Jefferson Public Radio. Whatever our differences, we all share a profound pride in JPR, and the contributions JPR has made to life here in the State of Jefferson. We also share, I believe, a deep commitment to the ongoing successful operation of JPR into the future. I respectfully request that this board avoid precipitous action by taking the time to carefully consider the unavoidable consequences of some of the resolutions before you today.

I still believe that we can resolve the differences between us and continue to work together in some fashion for the benefit of JPR. I would like to present another option to accomplishing that goal. At this time, we think it would be beneficial to bring in a professional, third-party mediator to help SOU and JPRF resolve the issues that remain between us. As a gesture of good faith, and in the interest of coming to a successful resolution, Ron could participate fully and completely in the mediation process. In the course of the mediation, we will be open and willing to consider all possible options, with the hope of achieving a resolution that addresses the important concerns laid out in the Oregon University System audit, protects the interests of the JPR Foundation, and insures a vibrant future for JPR.

While I continue to hope for a mutually beneficial solution, I must be clear that, if the board passes some of the resolutions before it today, SOU must take prompt action to protect the interests of JPR, its donors and the University. As you know, SOU is a public university and has a legal obligation to be a good steward of public assets. In light of that obligation, we have consulted external legal counsel about the possible consequences of the actions before the JPRF board, and we will follow the advice of counsel in taking whatever action is warranted should these resolutions pass. Our attorneys have drafted a letter outlining the serious potential risks associated with the proposed resolutions, and they have asked the JPR Foundation's attorney to share that letter with you all.

I believe that, if you pass these resolutions and SOU is required to take protective legal action, this situation will quickly move past the point where we can reach an amicable resolution. The consequences of allowing this to devolve into an adversarial contest will be dire for all concerned. It doesn't have to be this way. I'm willing to work with you to do what is necessary to avoid that outcome and reach a positive outcome in the best interest of JPR. I hope you are willing to do the same.