VANCOUVER ISLAND UNIVERSITY

To whom it may concern: March 24, 2026

I am the Jarislowsky Chair in Trust and Political Leadership at Vancouver Island University (VIU). Before coming to VIU in 2023, I was an Associate Professor of Political Science at the University of Pittsburgh. Before that, I was a post-doctoral fellow at Harvard University and a policy analyst and facilitator with the Ontario Citizens' Assembly on Electoral Reform. I have a BA from the University of Winnipeg, an MA from McGill, and a PhD from the University of British Columbia.

I am interested in serving on the Presidential Search Advisory Committee because I want to play a (small) role in helping to plan the future our university. I love teaching here. Our students are enthusiastic, diverse, and eager to learn. I have studied, taught, and researched at both small and large universities. I know that what we're doing at VIU is both unique and intellectually enriching. For example, we provide our students with a level of mentorship they would only otherwise receive at the most elite universities in the world. That is something special — and valuable. Many of my students at VIU are among the very best students I've taught in my career.

VIU needs to be protected (in this time of austerity) and ambitiously developed (even though we are in a time of austerity). If we do not develop — if we only retreat — we will not strengthen and protect the future of our institution.

We can develop VIU in creative ways that will strengthen the institution both financially and pedagogically. The value of this place is in its history — and we need to preserve the best aspects of our institutional culture and traditions. But we will have to change — and we've already started to do so. I want to hear what my colleagues and the job applicants think about how VIU should (or should not) be reformed, and why. We need a president who can clearly and convincingly explain how VIU can be strengthened and improved at this critical juncture in our history.

We will need a strong, creative, and *democratic* president to help us navigate our shared futures together. We need a competent, effective, and ethical leader. And we will need someone who has the skills, knowledge, and political savvy to ensure that our governments recognize the value of our universities and remain committed to them financially. Now is the time for that kind of leader. Our task will be to find one.

Please do not hesitate to contact me if you require any additional information.

Thank you for your consideration,

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