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PRESIDENT**

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February 10, 2023

The Honorable Jason E. Mumpower
Comptroller of the Treasury
Tennessee State Capitol
Nashville, TN 37243

Dear Comptroller Mumpower:

We appreciate the efforts of the Comptroller's staff in assembling this report. We take seriously the matters addressed in the report and thank you for conducting the review. We are resolute in our ongoing commitment to be effective stewards of the State's resources and ensure that Tennessee State University provides a quality, life-changing education to its students.

We will work closely with the TSU Board of Trustees to continue and further enhance the momentum we have developed to improve the university's operational effectiveness. As you know from the official records made from TSU's response to previous inquiries, we have already taken substantive measures and are taking additional measures to address the items of focus contained in your report, including in the areas of housing, enrollment, fiscal practices, and communications. These items will be reflected in TSU's Action Plan. We are also committed to working more closely with the Comptroller's Office to address other operational efficiencies. For example, we recently met with the Comptroller's Office's Higher Education Resource Office (HERO) and provided a demonstration of TSU's new game-changing enrollment management software.

We note a key fact that is not included in your report:

No funds were missing or misappropriated as your office has confirmed.

Respectfully, we do not concur with all the policy considerations contained in the Comptroller's Report. We view some of the considerations to be significantly disruptive and unfair to students who have come to expect and benefit from having their own governing board – a governing board that is focused on meeting the needs of TSU students. Moreover, some of the policy considerations are unprecedented, unwarranted, inappropriate, unnecessary, too far reaching, and inequitable. We are, however, firmly committed to taking substantive actions to address the concerns reflected in the Comptroller's Report.

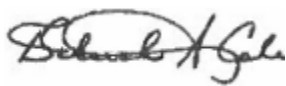
Accordingly, we will implement the following actions or enhancements immediately:

- We will share copies of the Comptroller's report with the TSU Board of Trustees and engage in a public discussion about the report with the Board at its next meeting on March 16, 2023.

- We will work with the TSU Board of Trustees to ensure that our policies governing fiscal and budget changes are followed, and we will make additional policy modifications as deemed appropriate, including those in the scholarships area.
- We will move expeditiously to ensure that we have appropriate staffing in our operational areas, including the capital projects manager position and additional staff in our housing department.
- We will enhance our overall documentation practices, including the documentation of scholarship award decisions, with an appropriate multiple-step approval process. We also will provide an annual scholarship plan to the TSU Board of Trustees.
- We will ensure that the University is more responsive to communications from students and parents. Upon a directive from our Board of Trustees, we have established the Office of Customer Relations, and our recent roll out of new software pertaining to enrollment and financial aid matters, will aid tremendously in this effort.
- We will work with the Board to elevate our efforts to address our housing challenges, including pursuing additional on-campus housing, as you noted in your report, accelerate housing related decisions and deadlines, and enhance our housing referral program. This effort will include direct and substantive involvement by the Board, including the Board's Special Committee on Housing.
- We will continue to provide housing and enrollment application data to the TSU Board of Trustees, including at its March, June, and September meetings. TSU will also provide a copy of such data to THEC.
- The Board Chair will schedule and engage the Board in regular planning sessions on enrollment, housing, and financial aid, commencing with the March 16, 2023, Board or Board Committee meeting.
- The Board will continue its plans to undergo a self-assessment, commencing at its March 16, 2023, meeting, and engage in efforts to further strengthen its effectiveness consistent with governance principles. These plans include ongoing utilization of a governance consultant from the Association of Governing Boards of Universities and Colleges (AGB). AGB is the premier university governance organization in the country and the consultant was previously retained by THEC for governance related consultation.

In addition to the action items referenced in this letter, we plan to utilize the Comptroller's report, in a comprehensive manner, to address the operational issues more effectively and ensure student success.

Sincerely,



Dr. Deborah Cole
Chair, TSU Board of Trustees



Dr. Glenda Glover
President, Tennessee State University