

Rutgers School of Law – Newark
Student Bar Association

**Resolution Raising Concerns Over the New Jersey Higher Education
Task Force Report**

Whereas, as the governing body of Rutgers School of Law-Newark, the Student Bar Association (SBA), seeks to represent the interests of the student body, and

Whereas, there has been significant discussion in the past decade over various plans and initiatives to reform and improve the structure of Rutgers University and quality of higher education in New Jersey¹, and

Whereas, Governor Chris Christie charged the New Jersey Higher Education Task Force with the duty to examine ways to strengthen the state’s colleges and universities, and

Whereas, on January 4, 2011, the New Jersey Higher Education Task Force released its findings in a report with more than 70 recommendations, and

Whereas, this report proposes “reuniting Rutgers–New Brunswick and UMDNJ’s Robert Wood Johnson Medical School and School of Public Health” with the goal “to improve medical education and place Rutgers among the top 10 public research universities in the nation²” by providing it with a medical school, and

Whereas, the recommendations that concern the Rutgers-Newark campus would rename UMDNJ as the New Jersey Health Sciences University and it would “consist of the Newark-based medical, dental, nursing, health-related professions, and graduate biomedical sciences schools. UMDNJ's University Behavioral Health Care, Public Health Research Institute, and School of Osteopathic Medicine, would also be part of NJHSU but with much greater autonomy³,” and

Whereas, the report supports a “long-term public-private partnership” for Newark’s University Hospital’s so that it may continue to serve as a “Level One Trauma Center and a hub of medical care for New Jersey and Newark⁴”, and

¹ In task force report, UMDNJ faces third call to merge with Rutgers University in a decade, January 05, 2011

http://www.nj.com/news/index.ssf/2011/01/umdnj_faces_third_call_to_merg.html

² Rutgers New Jersey Higher Education Task Force Report,

<http://higheredtaskforce.rutgers.edu/rutgers-specific-questions>

³O’Dea, Colleen, Remaking Rutgers: Camden Campus to Become Part of Rowan University What's behind the controversial plan to reshape higher education in South Jersey?

<http://www.njspotlight.com/stories/12/0206/0250/>

⁴ <http://www.state.nj.us/governor/news/news/552012/approved/20120125b.html>

Whereas, the Committee's recommendations that pertain to the Rutgers-Camden campus call for a merger of all the Rutgers-Camden facilities and academic units into Rowan University, and

Whereas, merging Rutgers-Camden into Rowan University would include Rowan's acquisition of Rutgers' business school and law school in Camden, and

Whereas, Rowan University will inaugurate its Cooper Medical School in the fall of 2012, its takeover of Rutgers Camden would strengthen its case to be designated a public research university, and

Whereas, the SBA supports the Committee's recommendations to bolster Rutgers' stature as a national public research university by acquiring a medical school in New Brunswick and streamlining medical and health-related education on the Newark campus, and

Whereas, the SBA discussed its reservations in regards to the more controversial and unprecedented recommendation that affects the Rutgers-Camden campus at its January 31st, 2012 meeting, and

Whereas, the main reservations from the SBA include, the lack of transparency over the planning and timeline for the Camden merger, particularly how the New Jersey Legislature, Governor and Rutgers' Board of Governors and Trustees can approve this plan with sufficient time to examine the costs related with such a large merger, and

Whereas, the SBA also has reservations with the Rowan-Rutgers merger in light of the significant investments of over \$100 million that Rutgers University has made to improve the Rutgers Camden⁵ campus, and

Whereas, another concern for the SBA is the impact of the Camden-Rowan merger on the contracts and professional prospects for the law school faculty and expectation of Rutgers School of Law-Camden students to graduate with a Rutgers degree and connection to the Camden law school, and

Be It Hereby Resolved, that the SBA supports public discussion over the concerns raised in this resolution and any other public comment with the New Jersey legislature that encourages examining the costs and impact for Rutgers University and the State of New Jersey of losing the Rutgers-Camden campus, and

Be it Further Resolved, that the SBA supports implementing the Committee's recommendations individually and discourages an approach that withholds the creation of a Rutgers medical school unless Rutgers University cedes its Camden campus.

⁵O'Dea, Colleen. Remaking Rutgers: Camden Campus to Become Part of Rowan University
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