



School of Law | Camden

School of Law-Camden
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Ralph Izzo
Chair, Rutgers Board of Governors
Public Service Enterprise Group, Inc.
80 Park Place, 4th Floor
Newark, NJ 07102

Kenneth M. Schmidt
Chair, Rutgers Board of Trustees
515 East 79th Street, Apt. 27A
New York, NY 10075

Richard L. McCormick, President
Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey
83 Somerset Street
New Brunswick, NJ 08901-1281

Dear Chairman Izzo, Chairman Schmidt, and President McCormick,

We, the faculty of the Rutgers School of Law–Camden, are writing with profound concern to urge you to reject the proposed merger of Rutgers–Camden, including the School of Law, with Rowan University.

To be clear, we welcome the attention paid by the University of Medicine and Dentistry Advisory Committee to higher education in South Jersey generally and to Rutgers–Camden specifically, which has long faced significant funding challenges. But the Committee’s proposal as it stands calls for nothing less than for Rutgers to abandon a full third of the state it was founded to serve as *The State University of New Jersey*. In disavowing Rutgers–Camden, it would at once devastate the School of Law and rob Rutgers of one its leading research, teaching, and public service institutions. Moreover, we believe a request to approve the proposal, shorn of detail on matters critically important to Rutgers, would place an unfair burden on you without additional information and analysis.

There are especially compelling reasons to keep the School of Law at Camden within Rutgers. First, the Rutgers name and affiliation are crucial to the success of the School of Law. Ours is a nationally recognized law school. It has that status primarily because of our faculty, many of whom are internationally renowned, and all of whom are committed to producing first-rate scholarship and first-rate lawyers. We chose Rutgers because of its standing as the flagship research university of New Jersey. For the same reason, we have chosen to remain at Rutgers, often in the face of lateral offers from other excellent research universities. We are a devoted and distinguished faculty that identifies closely with Rutgers. Severing the School of Law’s ties to Rutgers would undo the achievements we have earned in Rutgers’s name. Underscoring this preventable crisis, we are on the cusp of recruiting perhaps the greatest

incoming class of faculty in the School of Law's history, and each new hire and candidate has called to express serious concern that we remain a Rutgers law school. Retaining the existing faculty is equally a concern. And this is to say nothing of the disconcerting effect the merger would likely have on student recruitment and retention and alumni support.

Second, the School of Law's achievements are a credit extending beyond our faculty to Rutgers as a whole. We have won prestigious national and international fellowships. We have published books with the best publishers – more than a dozen in just the past four years. We have supervised clinics serving the neediest residents of New Jersey. We are nationally known for our legal writing and pro bono programs. And we have taught thousands of students, drawn from across New Jersey and the country, and seen them off to successful and even distinguished careers in law. All of these achievements enhance the national and global reputation of the University. We add real value to Rutgers. Severing the School of Law's ties to Rutgers would impose a substantial reputational (and financial) cost on the University.

Rutgers University could have the finest public law school in the Northeast, if we maintain our ties to the University. As President McCormick knows, long before the University of Medicine and Dentistry Advisory Committee began its work, the Schools of Law in Camden and Newark were actively pursuing avenues of cooperation with the aim of ultimately creating "Rutgers Law", which all agree would have a presence in New Brunswick. That process is ongoing – indeed, we held a faculty meeting just last Monday to discuss the next steps – and it holds the promise of raising the national stature of legal education and scholarship at Rutgers to unprecedented heights. Accepting the Committee's merger recommendation would not simply undo all of the progress that we have made in the service of Rutgers on this front, it would preempt this extraordinary opportunity for the University. Rutgers could have an elite public law school, placing it in league with the finest state research universities, all of which have first-class law schools. But this can only be realized if Rutgers Law combines the strengths of the law schools in both Camden and Newark.

We are wholeheartedly in favor of a premier public research university in South Jersey. We at the Rutgers School of Law–Camden are confident that we are already doing our part to provide our region with precisely that. We want to further enhance higher education in South Jersey and we recognize that this can be accomplished in myriad ways, including through a consortium. We resolutely believe, however, that any plan requires that we remain part of Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey.

We stand ready to work with you in maintaining and enhancing the strengths of Rutgers University. Thank you for your support.

Sincerely,

The Faculty of Rutgers School of Law–Camden