



PennState

Graduate and Professional Student Association
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The Honorable Tom Wolf
Governor of Pennsylvania
Office of the Governor
508 Main Capitol Building
Harrisburg, PA 17120

Dear Governor Wolf,

I write to you today as President of the Graduate and Professional Student Association – one of the three student governments recognized by the Board of Trustees of the Pennsylvania State University – to express support for the continuation of a tradition which has lasted since 1971: the gubernatorial appointment of a student to serve on the Penn State Board of Trustees.

In 2015, the student governments at Penn State made significant progress to improve shared governance at our University by successfully advocating for and choosing the first student-selected member of the Board of Trustees, Luke Metaxas. This was a major victory for students at the time, as a student trustee position became permanently codified within the Board’s structure. However, this new student-selected trustee was not intended as a replacement for the long-standing student gubernatorial appointment, which has been filled by graduate student Allison Goldstein for the last three years. I echo many of the sentiments expressed by University Park Undergraduate Association (UPUA) President Katie Jordan in advocating for the appointment of another student to the Board, and I believe that such an appointment would greatly benefit the University and its students across the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania.

Both of the students currently serving on the Board of Trustees have demonstrated the importance of involving students in the highest levels of the university’s decision-making. They have bridged the gap between the University’s leadership and its students by bringing unique perspectives to the table and ensuring that the voices of nearly 100,000 students across the Commonwealth are heard. Although student government leaders are invited to serve on six of the Board’s committees, they do not have voting privileges and therefore do not have the same impact as an official Board member. In addition, while many similar universities’ governing bodies have one or more student members, Penn State’s large Board of Trustees has 36 voting members, and this minimizes the influence that a single trustee has. If another student is not appointed to the Board, the student voice in Penn State’s governing body will become a smaller fraction than it is at many of our peer universities.

As Governor, you have made delivering quality education to Pennsylvanians one of your top priorities. By maintaining the tradition of appointing a student as a voting member of the Board of Trustees, you can ensure that Penn State students continue to have a significant voice in one of the Commonwealth’s leading and widest-reaching educational institutions.

Best regards,

Matthew Krott
President, Graduate and Professional Student Association