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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**TRANSPARENCY TASK FORCE APPROVES RECOMMENDATIONS TO BOARD OF REGENTS**

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(URBANDALE, Iowa) – The Transparency Task Force of the Board of Regents, State of Iowa, in its meeting today, fulfilled its two charges from the Board of Regents for developing recommendations for improved public transparency. The Task Force voted unanimously to forward its recommendations to the Board for 1) best practices in responding to public information requests, and 2) best practices for additional access to public information of interest to Iowans. The Board will consider the recommendations at its August 7-8 meeting at Iowa State University.

In response to the first charge, the recommendations of the Task Force include the designation of a transparency officer at each institution and the Board Office to track public records requests and share the information publicly via institutional and Board Office web sites.

With respect to the second charge, the Task Force recommendations include expanded opportunities for public comment on Board issues. This includes a new recommendation for designated public comment periods, of a minimum of one hour each, at each institution and the Board Office prior to each Board meeting, to be recorded and shared with Board members and the public. This would provide greater access for Iowans through public forums at six sites across the state to be held eight times per year and scheduled after normal working hours to better accommodate the public.

"I believe the recommendations for best practices could well place Iowa at the leading edge in the nation with respect to public openness, transparency and accountability to the people of the state. Iowa has the potential to be a national leader in this area and set the example for other states to follow," said Executive Director Bob Donley.

"I am grateful to the members of the Transparency Task Force for contributing their expertise and expressing the concerns of Iowans in developing the recommendations in a highly responsive and timely manner," added Regent Carroll.

The recommendations were developed based on public hearings held throughout the state at ICN sites in 38 communities, through written public comments on the Board's Transparency Task Force web site and through comments and suggestions expressed by a panel of media representatives.

As the public is aware, the Board's longstanding practice allows for public comment at each of its meetings. The Task Force recommendations will enhance this process through the work of a Transparency Officer who will hear public testimony at each institution and the Board Office.

"The recommendations of the Transparency Task Force will allow the Board to be more responsive to the concerns of Iowans. In particular, the public comment periods prior to each Board meeting will allow the Board additional time for more careful consideration of the public's concerns," added Regent Carroll.

The full list of the recommendations of the Transparency Task Force is attached. The information can also be found at the following link to the Board's web site – <http://www.regents.iowa.gov/TransparencyTaskForce/Recommendationsasapproved061913.pdf>.

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