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Sent: Wednesday, August 20, 2008 4:59 PM

To: bobd@meardonlaw.com; bonnie campbell; craig lang; dave miles; jack evans; Rose Vasquez; Ruth Harkin

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Subject:

Colleagues –

Since we seem to be hearing from museum folks – letters, articles, etc. – about my request for a valuation of the Jackson Pollock painting, I thought I'd pass along a letter I wrote to a woman in Iowa City who wrote me about the painting. I went to college with her more than 50 years ago, and over the years she has been a visitor, an employee and a docent at the Iowa City museum, which she loves..

Best,

Michael

Michael Gartner

Dear Gail,

Thank you for the nice letter.

I have no idea whether the Pollock mural should be sold or not, but I strongly believe that the Board of Regents should know the value of the assets that we oversee. Thus, I have asked the Board office to report on the current value of the painting, the cost of insurance, the cost of security, any restrictions placed upon the gift by the donor, the history of the litigation between Peggy Guggenheim and the university, and the amount of time the painting has been on loan in recent years, and I've asked for a list of pieces the Museum has deaccessioned in recent years.

The Iowa Code requires that the Board of Regents govern all aspects of the three universities and the two special schools. That includes the hospital in Iowa City as well as all other arms of the three universities. The Museum is one of those arms. The three universities receive about \$650 million a year in direct state aid for operations and scores of millions more for capital expenses. The universities receive another \$450 million or so in tuition, a majority of which comes from Iowa students and their parents. Every year, it is a struggle to get the Legislature to appropriate the money the university presidents say they need, and every year it is a struggle to keep tuition affordable. The Board of Regents has a fiduciary and moral duty to the people of Iowa to govern the universities as best we can in order to keep the great parts great and make the good parts better. To do that, we need to use all the assets the very best way we know how. Museum directors should indeed argue passionately for their museum; hospital administrators should argue passionately for their hospital; veterinary school deans should argue passionately for their facilities. But the Regents must look at the whole and act wisely for the entire system.

I am sure the Pollock mural is indeed a treasure – though I suspect 95% of the people in this state didn't know of its existence until recent weeks – but I am equally sure that we must provide a great and affordable education for young people and great and affordable medical care for all people. And I am sure we must have great and well-paid teachers and fine and well-equipped buildings. All of this requires tough choices and much money. Thus, if there is a greater good for Iowans in selling the painting, then I think that should be explored. But we cannot even discuss that until we know the value and until we have answers to the other questions I have asked the staff to answer.

At any rate, thanks for the letter, and thanks, in particular, for the kind words about the death of Christopher. He was a terrific boy.

Best wishes,