

From: Steinke, Gary W [BOARD]

Sent: Friday, April 27, 2007 11:29 AM

To: Campbell, Bonnie J.; Evans, Jack B.; Fry, Bobbi; Jenny Connolly; Lang, Craig A.; Michael Gartner; Miles, David W.; Robert Downer; Rose Vasquez ; Ruth Harkin

Subject: FW: Guest Opinion

Good Morning,

Just to keep you informed, both the Des Moines Register and the Press-Citizen asked for a guest opinion on campus security. Attached is a collaborative piece that President Gartner and I submitted yesterday.

Gary

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Gary W. Steinke, *Executive Director*

TO: Carol Hunter, The Des Moines Register

SUBJECT: Guest Opinion

DATE: April 26, 2007

FROM: Michael G. Gartner, President
Board of Regents

Gary W. Steinke, Executive Director
Board of Regents

The Board of Regents is committed to keeping Iowa's public campuses as safe as possible.

It is committed to having the campus buildings be safe and free of hazards. It is committed to eliminating harassment of all kinds. It is committed to working with the campus communities to deal with use of alcohol that endangers both those who abuse it and those they may abuse. And, most certainly, it is committed to preventing violent acts – and having the right processes and technologies to respond appropriately if something awful does occur.

The issue of safety is always in the forefront for Regents, the staff of the Board of Regents, and administrators and leaders at the campuses. Now, following the tragedy at Virginia Tech, it is in the forefront of others' minds as well. One result is that there is much talk about arming the campus police at the University of Iowa, at Iowa State University, and at the University of Northern Iowa. People on all sides of the issue are making strong arguments, and the Iowa Senate itself proposed that the police be armed. That proposal failed on a 25-25 vote.

Emotions are running high, and that is not the right atmosphere for decision-making. The Board of Regents historically studies issues very carefully, then fully debates and deliberates before making a decision. This decision will be no different.

The day after the violence at Virginia Tech, Gov. Chet Culver and the Board of Regents asked the public universities to undertake a comprehensive and detailed review of all security-related protocols, procedures, technologies and counseling techniques that are currently in use by the institutions. The universities were asked to explore possible improvements in processes and protocols. This report will be finished in June, and it will be invaluable in helping to guide the thinking of all Iowans and especially the students – and their parents – who attend the state's public universities. This deadline will give us time to gather the data – and time to take a deep breath after the events at Blacksburg.

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Carol Hunter
The Des Moines Register
April 26, 2007

It is hoped that by June we all will have a better understanding of all the facts surrounding the tragedy at Virginia Tech. We will all benefit from learning more about what was done at Virginia Tech, what else could have been done, and what else should have been done. We do not yet have these facts – about the technologies that were used, the communications that were available, and the like. But that information will become available, and it will all be factored into the study the Governor and the Board of Regents have asked for.

Then, when the Board of Regents has all the facts, it will then do what it always tries to do: Carefully and thoughtfully develop a policy that is in the best interests of not only the campus communities but also of the entire state of Iowa.