



FIRST AMENDMENT FOUNDATION

336 East College Avenue, Suite 101 Tallahassee, FL 32301

www.floridafaf.org

30 March 2012

Dr. Solomon "Chuck" Badger
Chair, Board of Trustees
Florida A&M University
6733 Marion Court South
Jacksonville, Florida 32216

Dear Dr. Badger:

We are writing to express our concerns regarding the change in mission of the Anti-Hazing Committee created by the FAMU Board of Trustees – as has been widely reported, the original mission of the committee was changed from making recommendations to the Board to fact-finding only, a change that would allow the committee to avoid Sunshine and conduct its business behind closed doors. We urge you and the Board to reconsider this decision, Dr. Badger, and strongly recommend that the Board of Trustees take the position that regardless of its mission, the Anti-Hazing Committee will conduct its business and deliberations in full compliance with Florida's Sunshine Law.

As noted in Mr. Colson's letter to you of 29 March, the need for transparency in this situation is imperative, given the death of Robert Champion and concerns that the university has failed to take appropriate action to prevent hazing and harm to its students. This is an issue of grave public concern, and recent reports that FAMU faculty may have been involved in hazing activities have served to heighten such concerns.

We recognize that requiring the Anti-Hazing Committee to operate in the Sunshine will not solve the hazing problem, Dr. Badger, but it will allow the university community and the public at large an opportunity to assure itself that the committee and the FAMU Board of Trustees is doing all it can to address this very serious problem.

We appreciate your attention to our concerns and sincerely hope that the Board of Trustees will take the necessary action to ensure that the Anti-Hazing Committee transacts its business in the most open and transparent manner possible. If we can be of any assistance, please don't hesitate to contact us.

Sincerely,

Barbara A. Petersen, President

cc: Members, Florida A&M University Board of Trustees
Members, Florida Board of Governors
The Honorable Rick Scott, Governor
President James H. Ammons, FAMU
Tim Nickens, Chair, FAF and Editor of Editorials, *Tampa Bay Times*