



STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA  
OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR

ROY COOPER  
GOVERNOR

August 21, 2017

The Honorable Margaret Spellings, President  
University of North Carolina System  
910 Raleigh Road  
Chapel Hill, NC 27514

Dear President Spellings:

This letter is in response to your August 21, 2017 letter to me regarding threats at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill's campus. Of particular concern in your letter is the status of the Memorial to Civil War Soldiers of the University (commonly known as Silent Sam). As you already are aware, my administration has stood shoulder-to-shoulder with the University and local law enforcement officials since the troubling unrest in Charlottesville, Virginia to protect the safety of the University's students, faculty, and staff. Of note, the Department of Public Safety has been in contact with the University and local law enforcement as recently as this morning. We are in agreement that the safety of students, faculty, staff, and visitors to the University remains paramount.

Other university leaders have taken decisive actions in recent days. If our University leaders believe there is real risk to public safety, the law allows them to take immediate measures. In circumstances like this one, the law clearly gives the authority to "building inspector[s] or similar officials" to take steps in the interest of avoiding "threats to public safety." N.C.G.S. § 100-2.1(c)(3). If the University and its leadership believe such a dangerous condition is on campus, then the law gives it the authority to address those concerns. State law enforcement and emergency officials remain available to help and support the University as it navigates this process.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Roy Cooper".

Roy Cooper

CC: Lou Bissette, Chairman, UNC Board of Governors  
Haywood D. Cochrane, Chair, UNC-Chapel Hill Board of Trustees  
Dr. Carol Folt, Chancellor, UNC-Chapel Hill  
Eric Hooks, Secretary, NC Department of Public Safety