



BOARD OF SUPERVISORS  
**COUNTY OF HUMBOLDT**

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EUREKA, CALIFORNIA 95501    PHONE: (707) 476-2390

May 7, 2019

Honorable Gavin Newsom, Governor  
State of California  
1303 10th Street, Suite 1173  
Sacramento, CA 95814

Tim White, Chancellor  
CSU Office of the Chancellor  
401 Golden Shore  
Long Beach, CA 90802

CSU Board of Regents  
1111 Franklin Street  
Oakland, CA 94607

Dear Governor Newsom, Chancellor White and CSU Board of Regents:

The Board of Supervisors of the County of Humboldt is gravely concerned about the recent events affecting Humboldt State University's radio station KHSU. This community radio station has long served as a significant public benefit and an expression of the "exemplary partnership" with regard to the surrounding communities. We understand that the University is attempting to resolve its financial crisis by cutting back on its programs. However, the unilateral decision made by the HSU administration to essentially eliminate the station and its community, cultural and public safety values is detrimental to our region.

Since 1972 KHSU has functioned as a public radio station broadcasting from Humboldt State University. It was the first public radio station within the California State University system and has served as a valued community institution, providing varied locally-created programming and public dialogue that has fostered a longstanding relationship which served both the university and the larger community. KHSU has been supported by the local community, through individual donations and underwriter support, as well as through support from the University and outside grants.

KHSU served the University by providing internships and work programs for students and a platform for student voices, particularly for those from marginalized communities. The strength

of the station was drawn from its dedicated staff and volunteers, many of whom have volunteered at the station for many decades.

On April 11, 2019, the University administration abruptly fired five long-time employees and dismissed all volunteers and with this severed its strongest instrument for integration with HSU's surrounding communities. This action was one week after the station's latest spring pledge drive and after years of extensive investment from the community in the form of membership dues, sustaining memberships, and generous underwriting from local businesses.

We are dismayed by the complete absence of collegial dialogue from the University administration with community, volunteers, and staff in dealing with KHSU's issues or its future. While the University announced a desire to continue operation of KHSU with locally-produced programming, it has instead exclusively aired nationally syndicated programs and failed to retain experienced staff who could educate and train students in radio. Even student internships have been reported canceled.

We respectfully request the University's administration and the California State Universities Chancellor to reopen dialogue with the community, volunteers, and staff and explore options to restore the station to its long-held purpose and that local programming, which is an important community service (and is the strongest basis for local fundraising) be restored. We also recommend the reinstatement of staff and volunteers and an orderly transition to a shared governance structure with the local community in order to address the concerns of the university as well as the surrounding community of stakeholders.

Sincerely,

Rex Bohn, Chair  
Humboldt County Board of Supervisors

RB:kh

cc: Lisa Rossbacher, HSU President  
Senator Mike McGuire  
Assembly Member Jim Wood