



April 21, 2017

The Honorable Edmund G. Brown Jr.
Governor of California
The Honorable Gavin Newsom
Lieutenant Governor of California
State Capitol
Sacramento, CA 95814

Dear Governor Brown and Lieutenant Governor Newsom,

I wanted to personally write and ask you to use your influence as Ex Officio Members of the Board of Regents of the University of California to stand up for free speech on our University of California campuses.

Specifically, I ask that you use your influence to ensure the free speech of conservatives at the University of California, Berkeley. It is becoming clear that there is a developing pattern and practice of treating speakers invited by conservative student groups differently than liberal speakers on that historic university campus.

The University is denying the First Amendment rights of the Berkeley College Republicans and other conservative students by prohibiting a speaking event featuring Ann Coulter, a prominent conservative commentator and multiple best-selling author.

The University's decision violates fundamental principles of free speech, equal protection, and due process guaranteed by the United States Constitution, and should not be tolerated by Californians.

To apply a different standard to a conservative speaker than the standard applied to liberal speakers is an infringement of First Amendment rights and should NEVER happen at a University funded by the taxpayers of California.

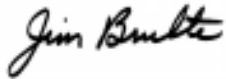
This is not the first time this semester that speakers invited by the Berkeley College Republicans have run into University-instituted roadblocks. Noted author and conservative activist David Horowitz and Milo Yiannopoulos, both had their speaking appearances unilaterally cancelled by UC Berkeley officials at the last minute, also due to "security concerns."

In each of the three recent conservative speech censorship instances, UC Berkeley impermissibly has allowed a "heckler's veto" to suppress the free speech rights of speakers properly invited by recognized student groups, and in each case, did so after first attempting to bully the students out of pursuing their quest to hear these conservative voices by piling on requirement after unconstitutional requirement – "security fees," inconvenient hours, inconvenient locations, attendance restrictions, and more.

UC Berkeley may not censor conservative speech simply because liberal students and off campus agitators oppose hearing conservative ideas and concepts, and the First Amendment protects the speech of ALL Americans. Even prominent liberal Berkeley professor Robert Reich disagrees with the University's administration, saying yesterday that Coulter should be allowed to speak: "It's one thing to cancel an address at the last moment because university and local police are not prepared to contain violence...It's another thing entirely to cancel an address before it is given, when police have adequate time to prepare for such eventualities."

California taxpayers, many of whom are conservative, pay for the operation of the University of California system. I respectfully request that you use all the resources of your good offices to ensure that Ms. Coulter is given the opportunity to speak as originally planned. Anything less would be a stain on the hallmark UC campus once known as the "Birthplace of the Free Speech Movement."

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jim Brulte". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

Senator Jim Brulte (Ret.), Chairman
California Republican Party