

## **Rep. Trail, UI faculty to enter 'flagship' fray: Supporters still upset over state board's Feb. 16 decision**

By Holly Bowen, Daily News staff writer | [0 comments](#)

The University of Idaho Faculty Senate and a Republican state representative from Moscow are separately planning to bombard the Idaho State Board of Education with opposition to its recent decision to remove the word "flagship" from the UI's mission statement.

Rep. Tom Trail late Monday afternoon forwarded the Daily News a draft copy of legislation he intends to introduce that would, if passed, officially establish the UI as the state's flagship university.

Meanwhile, the UI Faculty Senate will consider adopting a resolution this afternoon to request the board reconsider its Feb. 16 decision, which angered UI officials and supporters around the state.

The state board's next regular meeting is scheduled for April 18-19 at the UI's Moscow campus, and the Faculty Senate's proposed resolution calls on board members to consider re-adding the word at that time.

Trail's draft legislation, which he has not yet introduced to the Legislature, would add a new paragraph to Idaho Code that would recognize the UI as the state's flagship university.

"The (UI), having the distinction of being established in 1889 while Idaho was still a territory, and having been provided for in the constitution of the state of Idaho when Idaho became a state in 1890, is recognized as Idaho's flagship university," the draft states. "As such, the (UI), when established, formed the core of the public systems of higher education in the state."

Although university officials have used "flagship" to describe the university for several years, the word wasn't added to the UI mission statement until September of last year.

Board President Richard Westerberg said the removal of the word from the UI's mission statement was intended to put the state's three universities on more equal footing and to encourage collegial relationships among them, but instead the decision sparked a firestorm of protests.

Both Trail's draft legislation and the Faculty Senate's proposed resolution cite the university's statewide land-grant mission as established by the 1862 Morrill Act, and Trail also referenced the UI's 42-county Extension operations that reach more than 400,000 people per year as justification for establishing it as the official flagship.

The proposed UI Faculty Senate resolution, to be considered at 3:30 p.m. today in Brink Hall, expresses the senate's "profound disappointment" at the decision and directs the university's faculty secretary, Gail Eckwright, to send copies of the resolution to the board, to its executive director, Mike Rush, and to Idaho news media.

Trail's draft legislation states an "emergency is hereby declared to exist, (so) this act shall be in full force and effect on and after its passage and approval."

Separate from both the Faculty Senate and legislative campaigns, Samantha Perez, president of the Associated Students of the UI, is still collecting signatures on an online petition to ask the board to reconsider its decision.

That petition, located at this shortened link, <http://goo.gl/fFy47>, had about 4,700 signatures as of Monday afternoon, out of a goal of 10,000.

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