

University of California Regents' Meeting
2002 K-University Public Education Facilities Bond Campaign
July 18, 2002
Bruce B. Darling
Senior Vice President, University Affairs

The November ballot will include a \$13 billion bond measure to fund facilities construction and renovation at California public schools, colleges, and universities. It has been designated Proposition 47 and it will appear as the second bond measure on the ballot. It will provide \$688 million to the University of California for a two-year period. There will be a companion bond on the primary election ballot in 2004 in the amount of \$12 billion for the same purpose.

The campaign in support of Proposition 47 has two components. The first is a political campaign organized by a coalition of California business, education, labor, parent-teacher, and senior citizen organizations, together with the League of Women Voters. The second component is a public information effort carried out by California's public educational institutions. The focus of the public information effort will be to inform the UC family and the public so that they understand the benefits of this bond measure and the importance of voting in this election.

We have 110 days until election day. The political campaign has hired a campaign consulting firm with an excellent track record, conducted public opinion polling, and has submitted the ballot title and ballot argument to the Secretary of State. The campaign will submit the ballot rebuttal argument by tomorrow's deadline. Funds have been committed to carry out the campaign.

The Executive Committee of the coalition has three members: John Hein, of the California Teachers Association; Bill Hauck, of the California Business Roundtable; and myself. Chancellor Cicerone and I serve on the Board of Californians for Higher Education, the independent higher education organization that is mobilizing higher education support for the campaign. The UC public information effort is also underway, in a coordinated manner among the Office of the President and the campuses. It is being led by Assistant Vice President Michael Reese. It will involve workgroups comprised of government and community relations staff, communications

staff, alumni, faculty and staff, and campus volunteer leadership (alumni, campus foundations, and other support groups). We are preparing informational materials for use by the Regents, university employees, retirees, and campus volunteers. The messages are consonant with polling information.

Campus foundations have provided funds for the bond campaign. The alumni associations are adopting resolutions of support, as did the Regents last May. Under the leadership of Professor Viswanathan, the Academic Council will help inform the faculty.

We are carrying out the public information effort under guidelines developed by the General Counsel to ensure that we meet Fair Political Practices Commission regulations.

We will need the active involvement of the Regents. This will be a difficult campaign and we are taking our responsibilities very seriously.

Potential negatives in the campaign are the state's financial situation, the impact of the economy and the stock market on voter confidence, the dollar amount of the bond measure, and competition with local education bond measures that will also appear on the ballot.

Potential positives in the campaign include voters' belief that Proposition 1A (the 1998 education facilities bond measure) helped improve local schools but that more improvements are still needed; voters' belief that we should accommodate the large number of new students entering public education institutions; good timing in that interest rates are low which, in turn, will lower the cost to the state of repaying the bonds; the bond measure will produce an economic stimulus for the economy from new construction projects; education is still a high voter priority; and finally, that state funds are necessary to match local bonds in order to complete the construction of K-12 and community college facilities – and we need to help voters understand this connection.

I would be pleased to answer your questions.