Dear Mr. Erwin:

We, the University of Southern Maine Board of Visitors, are advocates for the University, charged with supporting advancement efforts and advising the President on community and regional needs. It is with that charge and the University of Southern Maine’s founding principles in mind that we unanimously write in support of changing the name of the University of Southern Maine to the University of Maine – Portland.

Maine is in the midst of a workforce crisis, brought on by low unemployment and shifting demographics. We are the oldest state in the nation, we are losing our young people and we have negative net migration. These are concerning indicators for Maine’s economic prospects and for the future of our State’s higher education institutions.

Research done by the University of Southern Maine strongly indicates that a name change will increase interest in the University among out of state students and to the University of Maine System as a whole. Out of state students increase revenue which means more money to fund scholarships, new academic programs and support for Maine students; it means introducing additional young people to our great state to develop roots and contribute to our economy.

It is in that spirit and our commitment to the future vitality of the University that we strongly support a name change. We respectfully ask you to support the University of Southern Maine’s proposal and vote in favor of rebranding the institution as the University of Maine – Portland.

Sincerely,

Clifton Greim
Roxane Cole
Jane Eberle
Tony Payne
Neil Kiely
Denise Taaffe

Kent Peterson
Tak Suppasettawat
Chris Joyce
Glenn Hutchinson
Mark Bessire
Luc Nya

Rebecca Swanson Conrad
Mary LaFontaine
Julia Sleeper
Dennis Eagleson
Reid Crewe
Mike Hyde