

June 27, 2021

To: UNC's Board of Trustees,

The Residence Hall Association (RHA) stands in solidarity with Nikole Hannah-Jones and denounces all forms of identity-based discrimination along with the partisan politics of the Board of Trustees (BOT). We are deeply concerned about the long-term effects of the current situation on Carolina's future, specifically in terms of its ability to recruit, retain, and ensure the wellbeing of a diverse community, as well as maintain its integrity as an academic institution. Ms. Nikole Hannah-Jones is the epitome of the values we should strive for; her work on the 1619 Project and in the classroom enriches not only the University but our nation as a whole. She has been and continues to be a trailblazer for the future of Carolina's students and academic programs. Further, we believe that she is critical for the reckoning that is necessary at Carolina. The failure to grant her tenure reaffirms to students, faculty, and staff of color that their experiences, perspectives, and contributions are undervalued at Carolina. Yet, we understand that this issue is itself only a symptom of a far deeper one at Carolina: **the systemic inequity that flows through the veins of this institution and has never truly been reckoned with.**

In order to prevent further divisions between the University and the community it represents, we demand that the BOT grant Nikole Hannah-Jones her rightfully earned tenure. We also call on the BOT to hold a special meeting before June 30th, per the petition by Student Body President and Board of Trustees member, Lamar Richards. Furthermore, we invite Chancellor Guskiewicz to state in writing his position on Nikole Hannah-Jones receiving tenure and explicitly state what his administration has done to advocate for her. We ask the Chancellor to stand firmly even in the midst of the biases and conflicts of interest carried by BOT members, understanding the trauma that this drawn-out situation has caused for the students he serves.

It is the RHA's responsibility to make our stance clear on this situation in order to best represent the concerns of the 9,000+ diverse students who live on-campus. At our organization's core, we believe in fostering a sense of community and belonging for *all* students; the actions the University has taken in response to this issue directly clash with that aim. We call on the BOT and the Chancellor to take action to regain the trust of this community and demonstrate that diversity is not simply a stated value, but something that we live by at UNC-Chapel Hill.

For the Residents,

Residence Hall Association, 2021-2022 Executive Board

