



271 Grant St., Buffalo, NY 14213 \* Tel. (718) 916-0925  
<http://public-accountability.org>

November 14, 2012

H. Carl McCall  
State University of New York  
State University Plaza  
353 Broadway  
Albany, NY 12246

Dear Chairman McCall,

I am writing to bring your attention to a number of important omissions and obfuscations in the September 27, 2012 review of the University at Buffalo's Shale Resources and Society Institute (SRSI) signed off on by President Satish Tripathi.

The Public Accountability Initiative (PAI), which I direct, is a 501(c)(3) non-profit research organization focused on corporate and government accountability. PAI issued a report in May identifying numerous problems with SRSI and its first report, including errors of basic math, false claims of peer review, wholesale copying from a previous report, and conflicts of interest among its authors.

We have watched with interest your efforts to initiate an open inquiry into the founding and funding of SRSI, and we applaud you and the SUNY board for your leadership in addressing this matter. Thank you for your demonstrated commitment to academic integrity and transparency.

Unfortunately, UB administrators have not demonstrated the same leadership or commitment, and appear to be withholding important documents and information from your inquiry. PAI compiled the attached report in order to ensure that you and other SUNY trustees have access to this information and are aware of this pattern of obstructionism. The report supplies a number of critical documents omitted from UB's review, attempts to clarify the circumstances surrounding SRSI's inception and funding based on information that is publicly available, and recapitulates the most serious error in the SRSI report.

UB administrators have had many opportunities to be transparent and open about these matters. With each omission, obfuscation, and manipulation of the facts surrounding SRSI and its first report, administrators are further damaging public trust in the institution and degrading its academic credibility.

On the other hand, SUNY trustees and UB faculty, staff, students, and alumni, led by UB CLEAR, have taken on a national leadership role on the issue of troubled academic-industry partnerships by pursuing transparency and accountability at SRSI. This problem is hardly limited to UB or SUNY; the University of Texas and Penn State have experienced similar problems with academic studies plagued by industry conflicts of interest. Your efforts have the potential to restore trust in UB and begin the process of transforming it into a national model for academic integrity, rather than a symbol of academic-industry partnerships gone awry.

Thank you again for your leadership and attention to these matters. Please feel free to contact me if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Kevin Connor', written in a cursive style.

Kevin Connor  
Executive Director  
kevin@public-accountability.org

cc: SUNY Trustees  
Dr. Nancy L. Zimpher, SUNY Chancellor