June 20, 2012

To: Honorable Members of the New Jersey State Legislature
From: Faculty Council of Robert Wood Johnson Medical School
RE: Bill S2063/A3102

The Faculty Council of Robert Wood Johnson Medical School (RWJMS) serves as a voice for the RWJMS Faculty. We have expressed our endorsement of the merger of RWJMS with Rutgers University to the Senate and Assembly Higher Education Committees. As one of two allopathic medical schools of UMDNJ, RWJMS was established originally as Rutgers Medical School. The basic science departments of RWJMS are located on the Busch Campus of Rutgers University in Piscataway, and the clinical campus is centered in downtown New Brunswick. As such, RWJMS is poised to flourish in collaboration with Rutgers University to the benefit of the state as a whole.

The legislation before the Senate (S2063) and Assembly (A3102) includes the transfer to Rutgers of RWJMS as one of the units of UMDNJ.

The Faculty of RWJMS is overwhelmingly in favor of alignment with Rutgers with the following provisions:

- Adequate funding is assured by the State to facilitate a smooth transition and make the merger of RWJMS with Rutgers a successful one
- Assurances expressed in the current version of the legislation are retained that provide for the transfer of employee rights and tenure agreements to Rutgers
- Belief that optimal integration of RWJMS with Rutgers will be attained if the school reports locally to the Rutgers administration.

While our commitment to the education of health care professionals is unwavering, and in line with our colleagues at the other schools of UMDNJ, the interests of the faculty in New Brunswick and Piscataway will best be served by recognizing and incorporating RWJMS as an integral component of the central New Jersey campus of Rutgers. It is by this mechanism that the merger of RWJMS with Rutgers will best serve the citizens of New Jersey.

The uncertainty that has plagued UMDNJ and the faculty of Robert Wood Johnson Medical School for much of the past decade has severely hindered opportunities for recruitment and development. The future of medical education and biomedical research in the State of New Jersey is at stake.

We urge the legislature and the governing boards of Rutgers to act expeditiously.

Sincerely yours and on behalf of the Faculty Council of RWJMS,

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