

100 Chestnut Street
Lexington, Mississippi 39095
August 10, 2019

Board of Trustees of the Mississippi State Institutions of Higher Learning
3825 Ridgewood Road
Jackson, MS 39211

Re: Dangerous Dormitories

Dear Trustees:

Beginning over a hundred years ago, my family has had five generations of Ole Miss students. My father played football and basketball there; my husband was a Carrier Scholar, editor of the annual , and in the Hall of Fame. Two of my children and my husband graduated from the Ole Miss Law School; one of our granddaughters is entering as a freshman this fall. Our loyalty is lifelong and deep.

I state my bona fides so that you will understand the sincerity of my heartfelt concern about a very disturbing policy in place now at Ole Miss and every other public college and university throughout our beloved Mississippi. This extremely dangerous policy which is presently in force is that of allowing opposite-gender visitation in dormitory rooms for long hours each day---and far into the night. As a result of this policy, mothers with daughters at Ole Miss or other state schools with similar policies have told me horrifying stories, and I am just one grandmother.

The lack of rules and standards in our state universities and colleges is dangerous. Anyone who thinks that young people, fresh out of high school, do not need the strong under-girding of behavioral boundaries is delusional. The Me-too movement has exposed the glaring dangers inherent in our universities' "open bedroom" policy.

Young women need protection from the superior strength of many young men. Young men need these same restraints. A young man's reputation can be ruined for a lifetime even if he is not guilty of wrongdoing. Our lack of rules and standards on college campuses in Mississippi borders on criminal neglect of our young people. If we do nothing, then we are complicit in the consequences which result. It's frightening!

Our rules state that freshmen *must* live in dormitories, and yet, we put them there *unprotected*.

There is also a serious financial risk for our institutions with the present dormitory policy: our universities are sitting ducks when the first female student files a law suit after she has been raped. My husband, who knows something about these matters, says that the rape victim will likely say, with considerable justification, that the University is more than negligent, it is an accessory. See the enclosed photograph taken this year in the freshman dormitory at Mississippi State.

The solution to this problem is very simple: ***immediately stop opposite-gender visitation in dormitory rooms at Ole Miss and on all state campuses.*** The expense of this solution is no more than taping a piece of paper on every dormitory door, which reads, "No opposite-gender in-room visitation." For those students already in coed dormitories, it is not asking too much for them to move to another building in order to fix this problem.

The safe dormitories on the Mississippi campuses will be a great attraction to our state schools for concerned parents everywhere.

Mississippi *must* take this courageous step for a return to safety on all university and colleges campuses. NOW IS THE TIME!

Sincerely,

(Mrs. Don Barrett)

EXHIBIT A

OPPOSITE-GENDER VISITATION HOURS AT MISSISSIPPI INSTITUTIONS UNDER THE AUSPICES OF IHL

University of Mississippi:

9:00 a.m.-midnight, Sunday-Thursday

9:00 a.m.-2:00 a.m., Friday, Saturday

Mississippi State University:

10:00 a.m. to 2:00 a.m.

University of Southern Mississippi:

10:00 a.m. to midnight, Sunday -Thursday

10:00 a.m. to 1:00 a.m., Friday and Saturday

Mississippi University for Women

1:00 p.m. to 1:00 a.m., Sunday through Saturday

Mississippi Valley State University

3:00 p.m. to 12:00 a.m., Sunday through Thursday

3:00 p.m. to 2:00 a.m. Friday and Saturday

Alcorn State University:

Sunday-Thursday 2:00 p.m.-11:00 p.m.

Friday-Saturday 2:00 p.m.-1:00 a.m.

Delta State University:

12:00 p.m.- 1:00 a.m.

Jackson State University:

4:00 p.m.-12:00 a.m., Friday through Saturday

4:00 p.m.-10:00 p.m., Sunday

EXHIBIT B

