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Chancellor's Statement on Police Review Board Report on November 9, 2011

I want to thank Professor Jesse Choper and the other members of the Police Review Board (PRB) for their Report on November 9, 2011 which was submitted to me on May 29, 2012. This report has been provided in response to my request for a review shortly after that day's unfortunate events. The PRB has strived to produce a complete and accurate understanding of what occurred on the afternoon and evening of that day and to render a report that is overall balanced and fair in its judgment of police conduct and on the campus leadership's management of that conduct on November 9th. The PRB report, together with the Operational Review conducted by Jeff Young, Assistant Police Chief at UCLA, provide valuable guidance on dealing with the challenges of protest management on our campus and for handling the wide range and variety of protests that can and do occur. We expect that the forthcoming Robinson-Edley final report will also contain a number of helpful suggestions to enable campuses to handle protests involving civil disobedience as effectively as possible.

While the PRB report notes that the Occupy Cal movement presented particular challenges for the Berkeley campus, it concludes that our management of the protest was inconsistent at times with safeguarding the norms expected of Berkeley to protect free speech and assembly. We truly regret that our processes were not adequate for dealing with the particular challenges of that day. Indeed, as referenced in the PRB report, we have already articulated a set of principles which are consonant with this report. These principles, which have evolved as we experience and learn more about protest management, have been set out as guidelines for our newly formed Protest Response Team. We are confident that these guidelines, which the PRB report believes "accurately express the norms of the Berkeley campus," will minimize the likelihood of unfortunate interactions and use of force such as occurred on November 9th.

As recommended by the PRB report, we will continue to clarify and improve future responses to student demonstrations and protest on campus, building on the Protest Response Team Principles and on experience gained to improve planning for and handling of demonstrations consistent with honoring the University's commitment to freedom of expression and maintaining the kind of secure and safe environment which makes that ideal possible.

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Robert J. Birgeneau".
Robert J. Birgeneau