Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I would like to begin my remarks by thanking Jim Dworkin for hosting us in such grand style. Being from Michigan, for many years Andrea and I would take our children to South Haven in the summer, and drove by this lovely 269-acre campus many times. I was always struck by the beautifully manicured grounds and strategically placed sculpture. I am grateful for finally having the opportunity to see things up close.

As a member of the Provost Search Committee, I am very pleased to inform you the Committee has unanimously agreed on a slate of excellent candidates who will each visit the West Lafayette campus in the very near future. I had hoped we would have announced the candidates publicly in time for me to tell you who they are, but the timing is such that I am unable to do this. There is considerable interest in this position and we had a very good pool from which to draw. The announcement will be in Purdue Today soon.

The Year-Round Task Force has had meetings with President Daniels, Al Diaz, Keith Murray, Frank Blalark, Pam Horne, Melissa Johnson, and others since our February meeting. This group, under the leadership of Professor Andrew Hirsch, will divide into smaller teams to dig more deeply into particular areas such as faculty issues of governance, teaching and research, and compensation; also scheduling and financial issues. I am very optimistic about where this is headed.

You will recall in my first set of remarks to you last July I identified a need for improved English language skills for our growing international student population. A two-year budget of $2 million was approved to support the language and cultural competency of these students. Key aspects include using assessments of language skills to place the 300 new international students with the greatest need into GS 100 and 101, an expansion of English 106i from 750 seats per year to 1000 seats, and additional support for the Writing Lab.

The most important point is we now have a concerted effort at serving these students and more cohesion among faculty from English and Communications with staff from Student Success and International Programs.

I feel your decision to have the Chair of the University Senate on the Academic Affairs Committee as an ex officio member is working very well. I attended my first meeting in West Lafayette, and because of my teaching schedule phoned in yesterday.
The Senate voted to endorse a student-written statement of values titled "We Are Purdue." Written by Purdue Student Government, the statement was created in response to hate and bias incidents that occurred last spring. The statement includes a chant and describes six pillars, or values, that unite the University and those involved with it.

The statement will be incorporated into resident assistants' training programs and other aspects of student life. The Administrative and Professional Staff Advisory Committee and the Clerical and Service Staff Advisory Committee have also endorsed it.

With all this being said, I am very excited about the likely formation of a new Senate Standing Committee on Equity and Diversity. A need for strong faculty and staff leadership in University-level conversations related to such issues prompted the committee's proposed creation; along with the fact most of our peers have such a committee. The committee would work in conjunction with other efforts related to the subject on campus. To create the committee, the Senate will need to update its Bylaws and we will vote on this in April.

Thank you.