

**UNIVERSITIES**

- Texas A&M University
- Texas A&M University at Galveston
- Texas A&M Health Science Center
- Prairie View A&M University
- Texas A&M University-Commerce
- Tarleton State University
- West Texas A&M University
- Texas A&M University-Kingsville
- Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi
- Texas A&M International University
- Texas A&M University-Texarkana
- Texas A&M University-Central Texas
- Texas A&M University-San Antonio



**AGENCIES**

- Texas A&M AgriLife Research
- Texas A&M Engineering Experiment Station
- Texas A&M Forest Service
- Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service
- Texas A&M Engineering Extension Service
- Texas A&M Transportation Institute
- Texas A&M Veterinary Medical Diagnostic Laboratory
- Texas Division of Emergency Management

**OTHER MEMBER INSTITUTION**  
The RELIS Campus

# Board of Regents

## THE TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY SYSTEM

January 11, 2024

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Dear [REDACTED]

I sincerely hope you had a good holiday. My name is John Bellinger. I am a member of the Texas A&M University System Board of Regents, and I am currently serving as the Co-Chairman along with General Joe Ramirez, of the TAMU Rivalry Committee for the renewed TAMU vs UT football game scheduled to be played on November 30, 2024, in College Station.

As we all know, the Aggie Bonfire was a part of this tradition until the tragic incident that occurred in 1999. I cannot imagine the pain that you have suffered with the loss of Nathan 24 years ago. I want to express my deepest sympathy for your loss and my sincere apologies for the tragic circumstances that led to your loss.

You may be aware that for the past 12 years there has been a bonfire off campus that is primarily built by students. This bonfire has minimal oversight for safety measures and there is a concern that even though this is not a university sanctioned event, it still involves several hundred TAMU students who could potentially be at risk. There is no way that the TAMU Administration can stop the off-site bonfire. The students have a desire to continue the tradition with total respect for the 12 individuals who we lost in 1999.

As a father whose son helped build the unsanctioned off campus bonfire, I share this very real safety concern. Accordingly, the committee is in the preliminary stages of considering ways to have official oversight of the bonfire by multiple TAMUS agencies such as the Texas Emergency Management Agency, the Texas Forest Service, the TAMU Engineering department, and others. This may include moving the unsanctioned bonfire to the TAMU West Campus or the RELIS property.

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The members of the committee and I are extremely sensitive to your loss. I do not want to reopen the many wounds that you have but it is important to me to have your opinion.

I cannot apologize enough for what happened. It is critical that we learn from our mistakes and never forget [REDACTED] and the 11 others who lost their lives. We must remember their tragic passing, must always honor their legacy, and must also focus on preventing any possibility of a reoccurrence.

If you would be willing to meet with me and potentially other members of our committee, we will gladly come to your home or a nearby restaurant. I am available any time on January 16, 17, 18, 19, or 29.

Sincerely,



John W. Bellinger  
Co-Chairman, Rivalry Committee  
Member, Board of Regents  
The Texas A&M University System

[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]

CC: Regent Sam Torn  
BG Joe E. Ramirez, Jr.