



July 30, 2023

To the Faculty of Texas A&M University

During the recent legislative session, the Texas A&M Distinguished Professor Executive Committee was regularly briefed by Chancellor Sharp on the state of legislation affecting our university. Most concerning to us was legislation to eliminate tenure in universities. Chancellor Sharp shared our concern that any significant change in tenure policy would be catastrophic for Texas A&M and all state universities.

The Distinguished Professor Executive Committee has commended Chancellor Sharp for his actions on behalf of university professors in Texas. Our chancellor led the charge at the state level with the ultimate result that tenure was not only saved but codified in state law for the first time.

Chancellor Sharp is a strong supporter of free speech and academic freedom. In March, Professor Joy Alonzo in the School of Pharmacy was quickly censured by the University of Texas Medical Branch after a speech that included comments on the opioid crisis, an area in which she is a recognized expert. The TAMUS Health Science Center initiated an investigation that rapidly cleared Professor Alonzo, validating her right to free speech and academic freedom.

We applaud Chancellor Sharp and his officers for their quick action to defend and clear Professor Alonzo. We appreciate Chancellor Sharp's demonstrated commitment to the core values of faculty and students of the Texas A&M University System.

A resolution of the Executive Committee of the Distinguished Professors by unanimous consent:

"The Executive Committee of the Distinguished Professors of Texas A&M University commends Chancellor John Sharp for his aggressive, creative efforts that led to the preservation of tenure for university faculty throughout Texas. His actions on behalf of all of us are a legacy that will outlive his tenure as chancellor and establishes his reputation as a friend to all faculty. For his efforts to preserve tenure, we extend our sincere appreciation. We further commend Chancellor Sharp for his strong support of the rights of faculty to free speech and academic freedom and his continued engagement with representative bodies of the faculty."

Dr. B. Don Russell, Chair
Dr. Catherine Eckel, Vice Chair
Dr. Paul Hardin
Dr. John Gladysz
Dr. Richard Golsan
Dr. Olga Kocharovskaya
Dr. Bani Mallick
Dr. J. N. Reddy
Dr. Dorothy Shippen
Dr. Joerg Steiner
Dr. Nicholas Suntzeff