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Dear Lions,

*Nov. 23, 2020*

I write with a heavy heart to express my support for all students disappointed by the decision to reverse the impeachment, and subsequent determination that the sanctions are not permissible. Like many of you, I am saddened and demoralized that this process has revealed an utter lack of mechanisms to hold elected leaders accountable. As the Chair of the Senate, I extend my sincerest thanks to the countless students who had the courage to confront ASLMU and hold your elected officials to standards of decency, humanity, and basic respect for all. I am eternally grateful to the students and senators who put countless hours into this effort and am inspired that so many students in our community came together to reject homophobia and xenophobia. The responsibility to represent all students regardless of citizenship status, sexual orientation, or gender identity should be a basic tenet of leadership- especially at a university that prides itself on its commitment to justice.

The judicial board's decision to not uphold this impeachment has revealed a difficult but necessary truth to reckon with: ASLMU's structures and governing documents do not reflect a commitment to justice. Therefore there is a complete lack of mechanisms and democratic infrastructure to respond to the demands and needs of historically disenfranchised groups. For the rest of my term in office, I commit myself to a critical examination of what led to this disappointing outcome in order to begin transforming ASLMU into an institution that reflects a commitment to anti-racism and the University's mission of justice. Across ASLMU, several officers are committed to this end and look forward to being held accountable by our community to deliver real structural change.

Many elected and appointed officers across LT, cabinet, and Senate came into these roles with the intention of continuing the previous administration's work to move ASLMU forward, and shape an institution that prioritizes giving the student voice more agency. The circumstances surrounding this school year only further demonstrated the necessity of putting student advocacy at the forefront of ASLMU's mission and service to the Lion community. In light of everything we have learned from this long and difficult process, several officers intend to change the system so that it reflects a commitment to

anti-racism and avenues to confront White Supremacy from within. The power should be in the communities and constituents we serve.

This letter does not even begin to repair the damage done to ASLMU's relationship with various student communities, but I hope it serves as a start to move forward with a renewed and more nuanced commitment to justice. By being vulnerable about my own frustration, anger, and hurt about this outcome, I hope to make clear that I am holding space for all affected students. Jack and I unequivocally denounce conduct and language that perpetuates White Supremacy and violence against marginalized communities. Despite this setback, we reaffirm our commitment to serving all students on the Bluff, especially mixed status students and LGBT students.

In solidarity,

Elsie Mares '21- ASLMU Vice President