

Dear Members of the 20th General Assembly,

Together, we are writing this letter to express our grave concern for the guarantees of the constitutional process under the UPUA Bylaws and Constitution. We were Judicial Board Clerks, Associate Justices, and Chief Justices through the last Judicial Board Hearing, four elections, and the 15th-18th Assembly, but most of all, each of us were like you, members of UPUA that wanted to make Penn State better.

To impeach anyone, while disregarding constitutional procedure and fairness, is insulting to the students you were elected to represent.

The Constitution and Bylaws of UPUA are not suggestions to this organization. They are enforceable, and interpretations of them are solely vested in the power of the Judicial Board. While rarely used, the power of impeachment should be regarded as one of the most extreme measures possible to ensure a functioning student government. It should be regarded as important because the Assembly alone has the power to invalidate the results of an election of over three thousand people.

With this in mind, procedure is paramount to ensure fairness and equity, and to retain credibility with the student body, a student body you all have aimed to help since you were sworn in. Blatant disregard of care of rules and a lack of empathy show that self-interest and spite are held in higher regard than the duty of care. Scheming behind the backs of other people into a rushed impeachment without following procedure is a betrayal of the intentions you all came into the Assembly with. It is actions like these that are why the student body is losing trust in UPUA.

Ask yourselves why would it be fair to go through with these proceedings without advanced formal notice to the President, and in the absence of a Chief Justice to oversee this proceeding?

In this current United States Presidential Administration, we have seen the dangers of a group of people attempting to deny the rule of law. We have seen the weaponization of justice in failing to provide due process to people and the harm that it creates in failing to follow procedure. While not the same in context, the core argument you are using is the same: “the ends justify the means”.

Procedure must be followed, if not for the sake of the accused, then for the sake of the thousands of students who put their trust in their elected President. Legitimacy is created slowly over time but can also be destroyed in an instant. Impeaching a President on a rushed and sloppy process is closer to an organized coup than it is a fair endeavor. If you do not care about procedure, then you do not care about fairness and equity.

Impeach properly or do not impeach at all.

Signed,

Hayden D'Elena, Chief Justice 17th-18th Assembly  
Andrew Waldman, Chief Justice 16th-17th Assembly  
Jordan Zaia, Chief Justice 15th-16th Assembly