

February 25, 2004

Honorable Glenn S. White
First Bank of the South
2230 Riverside Parkway

Lawrenceville, Georgia 30043

Dear University System of Georgia Regent:

I am writing on behalf of the Georgia First Amendment Foundation. We are an organization that seeks to advance the cause of open government and monitors freedom of information issues throughout this state.

The University of Georgia Foundation improperly closed its meetings of February 12 and 13th, 2004 to the public, in violation of O.C.G.A. § 50-14-1 *et seq.* This practice is contrary to the Open Meetings Act and the state's public policy. The Attorney General advised the University of Georgia Foundation that its meetings should be open to the public, yet the Foundation completely and blatantly disregarded his advice.

Discussion regarding the leadership of the University of Georgia is exactly the type of debate that must take place in the open for the public to have confidence in institutions such as the University of Georgia Foundation. The individuals who serve on the Foundation are stewards of the public's interest, and the public trusts them to vigorously, intelligently, and **openly** debate the issues before them.

To that end, I have enclosed a copy of "Georgia's Sunshine Laws: A Citizen's Guide to Open Government," which discusses the Open Meetings Act as well as other open government issues pertinent to the University of Georgia Foundation's and your work.

We would appreciate an explanation as to what will be done to remedy this Open Meetings violation by the University of Georgia Foundation that goes against both the law and the interest of the public. We look forward to hearing from you at your earliest convenience in this regard. Thank you.

Sincerely,

Hollie Manheimer

Enclosure