

STATEMENT OF THE PENN STATE LAW FACULTY ON THE PROPOSED  
REUNIFICATION OF PENN STATE'S TWO LAW SCHOOLS  
(December 12, 2022)

On November 29, Penn State President Neeli Bendapudi announced her plan to recommend reunifying Penn State's two law schools. President Bendapudi also indicated her intent to create a panel, consisting of representatives from both law schools, charged with recommending options specifying the details of what a unified law school would look like. We, the undersigned faculty members of Penn State Law, look forward to informing the panel of the tremendous value that Penn State Law has to the University and the State College community, which would be lost if the unified law school did not maintain a significant presence in University Park.

We highlight just a few examples:

- Since its inception in 2006, the law school at Penn State's University Park campus has gained an international reputation with students and prospective employers and has graduated more than 2,500 students. Those alumni are strong supporters of Penn State Law and are now partners in some of the nation's largest law firms, legal counsel for some of the nation's largest corporations, and legal counsel for local, state, and federal government agencies and non-profit corporations.
- The reach of Penn State Law is not only nationwide, but indeed worldwide. The LL.M. program, which attracts 130–150 students each year, is among the most successful in the United States and currently has the most diverse class of its size anywhere in the country, with 150 students from 35 countries. These international students are attracted to a University Park location that provides them with a program integrated with the J.D. program and at the same time affords them access to a large community of international students as well as numerous support services for international visitors. The LL.M. program has produced hundreds of alumni in more than 90 countries, who now fill key positions in major U.S. and international law firms, government, the United Nations, NGOs, the judiciary, and law schools worldwide. In addition, Penn State Law has maintained more global agreements and partnerships than any other unit at Penn State, helping the University to increase its global footprint.
- Penn State Law's location on the University Park campus enables it to attract students interested in studying law who also want to take advantage of interdisciplinary opportunities. Alumni have graduated with dual degrees in Business, Health Law, Education, and International Affairs, to name a few. Apart from the dedicated joint degree students, many J.D. and LL.M. students take advantage of literally hundreds of courses across the University Park campus to supplement their degree with non-law courses.
- Because of its location on Penn State's University Park campus, Penn State Law attracts faculty who are interested in interdisciplinary work, as well as faculty who have clerked for the United States Supreme Court, who are Federal Appellate and District Court Judges, who are some of the country's top scholars and experienced practitioners, and who often testify before Congress and comment on current events. Penn State Law faculty have made

significant contributions to other units on campus by collaborating with, for example, the College of Earth and Mineral Sciences; the College of the Liberal Arts; the College of Arts and Architecture; the College of Agricultural Sciences; the College of Medicine; the Institutes of Energy and the Environment; the Sustainability Institute; the Criminal Justice Resource Center; and the Law, Policy, and Engineering Initiative. Penn State Law faculty members have also directed or co-directed Penn State centers such as the Center for Security Research and Education and the Center for Energy Law and Policy.

- Penn State Law has been able to recruit nationally recognized scholars, who were teaching at law schools more highly ranked than Penn State Law and who had – and will continue to have – opportunities to move to other law schools. But one of the reasons they chose Penn State Law was the opportunity to join the scholarly community at Penn State Law and the wider University Park campus. The Penn State Law faculty has contributed to the University’s reputation by publishing articles in leading law journals, such as the flagship law reviews at Yale, Columbia, Stanford, the University of Chicago, the University of Pennsylvania, Northwestern, the University of California, Texas, Duke, New York University, Emory, Georgetown, the University of Virginia, and the University of Southern California, and by writing books published by, for example, the University presses at Stanford, Oxford, and New York University. The scholarship written by the Penn State Law faculty has been widely cited in court opinions and articles written by professors at highly ranked law schools, and “the average number of all time downloads” for each author “currently affiliated” with Penn State Law is 4,200 according to the Social Science Research Network, where many law faculty post their scholarship. It will be difficult for Penn State to retain many of these highly respected scholars unless there is a significant law school presence in University Park.
- Penn State Law faculty and students have made significant contributions to high priority University programs, such as the Rural Economic Development Clinic and Center for Agricultural and Shale Law’s contributions to Penn State’s agricultural commitments with significant funding from the U.S. Department of Agriculture. Three other Penn State Law clinics – the Entrepreneur Assistance Clinic, the Intellectual Property Clinic, and the Arts, Sports and Entertainment Law Clinic – have served close to 1,300 clients during 2022 alone, including Penn State scientists and entrepreneurs, the Athletics Department, and Pennsylvanians turning to entrepreneurship after lay-offs. The Intellectual Property Clinic was recently chosen by the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office to run its Pro Bono Program in Pennsylvania.
- Penn State Law faculty members have become an important part of the State College and Centre County community, furthering the University’s mission as a land grant institution by, for example, holding elected office, partnering with local school and law enforcement officials on immigration policy, and aiding other underserved members of the community, such as veterans, indigent defendants, victims of domestic violence, and others with family law issues.

We recognize that there is a cost to having law schools in two locations, but given the development of Penn State’s two law schools, it has been proven that both have added value and have provided

benefits to Penn State and their respective communities. We are confident that once the panel created by President Bendapudi has reviewed all the data, it will likewise see the tremendous value in the unified law school continuing to have a significant presence in University Park.

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Six additional Penn State Law faculty who prefer to remain anonymous