

Statement from Joseph Castro:

In response to the recent report, I want to begin by saying that our universities and our society must work more effectively to protect victims of harassment. I have been a steadfast champion for gender equity throughout my career and will redouble my efforts in this important area going forward.

As President of Fresno State, my decisions on Title IX matters were guided by campus and California State University system policies and protocol, the direction of my then Chancellor Timothy White and General Counsel Andrew Jones, my campus counsel and policy experts at Fresno State and in the Chancellor's Office. I have served for over 32 years in both the University of California and California State University systems and I earned a reputation for my dedication to the success of students, faculty and staff. I disagree with several aspects of the investigators' findings as they do not align with the documentation I provided to her.

University leaders in the United States face complex and delicate personnel issues every day. I have learned many lessons from my handling of the Title IX matter involving Dr. Frank Lamas at Fresno State. These lessons will ensure that I am an even more effective leader in the future, including in the area of victims rights. I will share these lessons publicly to assist higher education leaders and governing board members across the nation who face similar personnel matters.

On my final day as Chancellor, I urged the CSU Board of Trustees to promptly adopt two policy reforms. First, I urged them to adopt a policy that prohibits any administrator who violates a Title IX policy from retreating to a faculty position. Dr. Lamas' contractual right to retreat to the faculty, as was specified in his employment offer letter at Fresno State, is what led to the settlement agreement authorized by then Chancellor White. Second, I urged them to prohibit letters of reference for any employee who violates a Title IX policy. The letter of reference I wrote was stipulated by the settlement agreement. These policy changes were thankfully adopted by the Board in July.

Mary and I loved serving at home at Fresno State and we love the people of the Central Valley. We gave our heart and soul to our service there because we knew that most of the students grew up in modest circumstances just like ours. The university rose to new heights of distinction during my Presidency. In partnership with our colleagues, we established innovative and comprehensive student basic needs and technology access programs, which students have indicated in surveys are critical to their sense of belonging and academic success. In addition, we secured funding to rebuild the campus' physical infrastructure, achieved record student enrollment and graduation rates and inspired support for the Lynda and Stewart Resnick Student

Union. Fresno State's momentum was evidenced by several national rankings, including a Number 17 national ranking by Washington Monthly in 2017.

Our success together at Fresno State is why the CSU Board of Trustees unanimously appointed me in September 2020 as the first native Californian and first Mexican American to lead the CSU. During my tenure as Chancellor, we secured the largest budget in CSU history; negotiated a historic budget compact with Governor Newsom; initiated new robust strategies to close stubborn equity gaps in graduation rates; eliminated the use of the SAT and ACT in admissions decisions; approved a new Cal Poly Humboldt designation; included caste in the CSU non-discrimination policy; launched an initiative ensuring that CSU students had access to mobile devices to do their work; and secured a \$30 million gift from Apple, the largest gift it has given to a higher education system.

I am grateful to have had an opportunity to serve in these leadership roles. My commitment to educating the next generation of talented and diverse leaders is unwavering and stronger than ever.