

Statement from Board of Regents Chair Ken Powell

I adamantly disagree with any characterization of the University, our faculty or our staff as having a culture of non-compliance. That charge is untrue and completely wrong. It ignores years of positive external and internal audit results and high-integrity work behind those results.

University and third-party audits reflect a broad, deep and comprehensive culture of compliance with the laws and policies that govern how we manage every dollar that comes into this University. No large organization is perfect, and so we use audit processes to identify isolated instances where the University's high standards are not met. Through our audit work, we hold ourselves accountable, identify issues, work promptly to resolve them and improve so we don't have similar issues in the future.

Our Board of Regents and the public receive regular updates on compliance, not only during regular meetings of the Board's Audit and Compliance Committee, but also through annual reports from our Office of Internal Audits, which reflect the most recent three years of data. We also receive an annual external audit reviewing all federal funding. The external audit is considered the gold standard of required audits, with scope and approach determined by the federal government and a third-party auditor conducting the work. For years, this report has had no significant audit findings. The University's Internal Audit Plan presented to the Board of Regents Audit and Compliance Committee each June has indicated that the University's internal controls and processes are working effectively as well.

It has been a top priority of mine that this University effectively manage funds we receive, whether it comes from federal agencies, the State of Minnesota, corporate sponsors or individual donors. As a public University, we have and will continue to focus on good fiscal stewardship of every dollar we receive.