Dear Board of Regents:

I am writing to you as a concerned student of the Nevada System of Higher Education. While our more than 100,000 students understand that the state is experiencing tough financial times, raising tuition is not the answer to budget shortfalls. We urge you, as the officials we elected, to represent us wisely and vote against raising tuition for the spring 2009 semester.

In the recent past, Nevada System of Higher Education students have not protested tuition increases. Most recently, in April, the Board voted for a 5 percent increase set to begin the 2009-2010 school year. This increase was supported by administrators that deemed the cuts "inflationary." The timing of the vote gave students ample time to figure out how to pay for school. If you were to vote now to increase tuition for spring 2009, you will be giving almost no time for students to determine how to prepare for the increase. For some students, it may be as easy as going to the financial aid office or bank and adjusting a number. However, for thousands of students who pay out-of-pocket, the adjustment will be dramatic and potentially devastating.

Furthermore, giving your constituents almost no information on the increase is unfair and wrong. Will the tuition increases apply to both in-state and out-of-state students? What is the exact percentage being proposed? Will the increases be permanent or temporary? These are questions that students deserve the answers to before the Board votes. Without those answers we cannot make informed decisions and give you the feedback you require.

What we do know is that UNLV has already dramatically reduced its budget. Part-time professors have lost their jobs, professors are doing less research, some student services have reduced their hours of operation and jobs are being left unfilled. To expect students to pay more while reducing the quality of their college experience is insulting and wrong.

Due to the poor timing of the Board meeting during study week as well as the short notice given to students regarding proposed tuition increases, many concerned students will be unable to attend to physically protest the agenda item. I hope you will consider this when voting on tuition increases.

Sincerely,