



THE OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY  
WEXNER MEDICAL CENTER

Department of Cancer Biology and Genetics

December 21, 2018

To: Bruce McPheron, PhD Provost

CC: Michael V. Drake, MD President  
Raphael Pollock, MD Cancer Center Director

From: The Faculty  
Department of Cancer Biology and Genetics

Dear Dr. McPheron,

We, the entire tenured faculty of the Department of Cancer Biology and Genetics (CBG), would like to formally respond to University Leadership regarding the recent dismissal of Dr. Carlo Croce as Chair.

After many discussions among members of this faculty, all agree that two major questions have not been answered yet.

- 1) What was the rationale for removing Dr. Croce from the Chair position prior to the end of his appointment? We need transparency and a public face on the process that led to Dr. Croce's dismissal, as many of our colleagues will ask.
- 2) Why were the Faculty not consulted as outlined in the Rules of the University Faculty 3335-3-35(B)<sup>1</sup>? These rules appear to provide a sensible guideline for the dismissal of a Chair, yet have been ignored.

In the absence of any information, if we had been consulted we would have expressed a strong and unanimous recommendation *against the apparently arbitrary dismissal* of Dr. Croce as Chair of our Department for several reasons:

- 1) *Under Dr. Croce's leadership* the Department of Cancer Biology and Genetics has become a flagship basic research Department within the Ohio State University and the Ohio State University Wexner Medical Center. It is currently the highest ranked Department in the Ohio State University Wexner Medical Center (26<sup>th</sup> among all Medical Schools according to Blueridge Rankings) and enjoys the highest per capita NIH funding on the entire campus. More importantly, several members of the Department, including Dr. Croce have made major contributions to science, and as a result they have achieved strong national and international name recognition. Two faculty members including Dr. Croce are members of the National Academy of Sciences (the only NAS members in the

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<sup>1</sup> Rules of the University Faculty 3335-3-35(B): "The president or his or her designee may remove a chair or director during a four-year term after consultation with the voting faculty and dean of the unit involved. The views of the faculty shall be given substantial weight in arriving at any decision to remove a chair or director from office".

EXHIBIT

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College of Medicine) and 6 members have an h-index >70, which to our knowledge constitutes ½ of the total number of OSU faculty with such an outstanding publication record. All of these talented scientists were either recruited or retained as a result of Dr. Croce's outstanding leadership, performance and reputation. These metrics of course, bring prestige to the University and facilitate the recruitment of new outstanding talent. One would expect that the University and the College of Medicine would make every effort to support such a Department and would avoid any actions that may destabilize it. We believe that the dismissal of Dr. Croce does exactly what should be avoided.

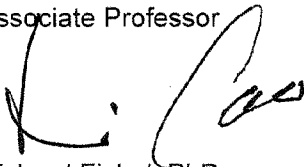
- 2) The destabilization of CBG may be manifested in different ways. Dr. Croce may decide to leave, in which case the University, the College of Medicine and the Cancer Center would lose one of the most prominent scientist on campus. This may affect scientific interactions and collaborations, which took many years to develop and which are critical for the Department, the Cancer Center and the University. In addition, given the fact that Dr. Croce is widely respected by the scientific community, as evidenced by the multitude of awards he has received for his work, his dismissal is likely to impact our ability to recruit new talent. Ironically, the same day Dr. Croce was being dismissed as Chair he was informed that he was selected to receive yet another prestigious scientific award.
- 3) Independent of whether Dr. Croce stays or leaves OSU, our ability to recruit a new Chair of the caliber of Dr. Croce will be challenging because most candidates of this caliber would be hesitant to take such a position given the circumstances of Dr. Croce's dismissal.
- 4) The Cancer Center Core Grant is up for renewal in January 2020, with the review occurring in the Spring of 2020. We find it logical to believe that the destabilization of the premier cancer research Department will most likely negatively affect the outcome of the renewal application. This is a serious concern because it may have a negative impact on the overall status of the University. Remarkably, there appears to have been very little consultation with the leadership of the Cancer Center about the broader impacts of the decision to dismiss Dr. Croce.

We respectfully request written answers to our questions as well as a meeting with our faculty if possible. In addition, given the apparent negative consequences of the decision to dismiss Dr. Croce as Chair of the Department of Cancer Biology and Genetics, we recommend that the case be reconsidered and the decision reversed.

Signed,

*The Tenured Faculty of Cancer Biology and Genetics (see below)*

Lei Cao, PhD  
Associate Professor



Richard Fishel, PhD  
Professor



Michael Freitas, PhD  
Associate Professor



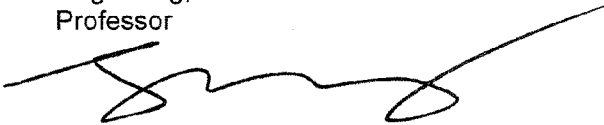
Lawrence Kirschner, MD, PhD  
Professor



Amanda Toland, PhD  
Associate Professor



Jing Wang, PhD  
Professor



Robin Wharton, PhD  
Professor



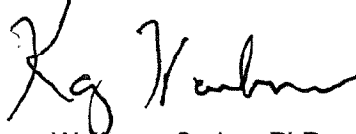
Albert de la Chapelle MD, PhD  
Professor



Harold Fisk, PhD  
Associate Professor



Kay Huebner, PhD  
Professor



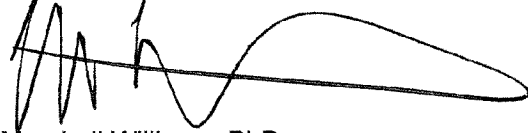
Wolfgang Sadee, PhD  
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Michael Weinstein, PhD  
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Marshall Williams, PhD  
Professor

Marshall V. Williams, Jr. Ph.D.