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## **NEW JERSEY PRESIDENTS' COUNCIL STATEMENT IN SUPPORT OF UKRAINE**

We, the members of the New Jersey Presidents' Council, are outraged and deeply saddened about the horrific unprovoked attack on Ukraine and stand in solidarity with Ukrainians as they defend the sovereignty of their nation.

Despite a strong international outcry and major sanctions being levied against Russia, Ukraine continues to suffer mass casualties and over 2.5 million Ukrainians have already fled the country with more to follow. As leaders of higher education, we commit to offering our support and assistance to Ukrainian students, faculty and community members here in New Jersey. We are pleased to see that the Department of Homeland Security announced the designation of Ukraine for Temporary Protected Status for 18 months. We know our support must extend beyond that designation.

Our campuses must continue to be true safe havens for students from Ukraine who are studying in the United States as well as scholars who are working and researching here. We also stand ready to welcome Ukrainian refugee students who are fleeing their homeland. It is critical for us to make space for students, faculty and staff of Ukrainian descent whose hearts are heavy with loss and who are hurting for those who share their heritage. In doing so, we must also understand that Russian-Americans on our campuses are not tied to the decisions of their nation's leaders and deserve to be treated respectfully.

As presidents of New Jersey's colleges and universities, we understand that this conflict goes beyond politics. This war speaks to and is a threat to humanity worldwide. As such, we will continue to encourage civic engagement and service to others. We will continue to honor our responsibility to lift and amplify the dialogue of equity for all people and justice in all its forms. We will continue to address this and other conflicts through the lenses of history, culture, science and other disciplines to ensure our students have a fundamental understanding of the interdependence of geopolitical relations.

The New Jersey Presidents' Council and its 55 institutional members call on our fellow New Jerseyans and members of our campus communities to welcome all people displaced by the conflict to ensure their safety, well-being and education. Together, we commit to kindness, compassion and equity in our words, policies, and actions, and we implore everyone to join us in these efforts.

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