

## MEMORANDUM

Date: April 6, 2007

To: Neil Leston  
President, URI Student Senate

From: Robert L. Carothers  
President

Subject: Controversy with URI College Republicans

Neil, I have read about and watched the controversy between the URI Student Senate and the URI College Republicans. As you know, this controversy has now spread well beyond the URI campus, and I can no longer wait for a negotiated resolution between the parties.

After a full review of the constitutional questions involved here, I must advise you that the action of the Student Senate to require the College Republicans to make certain representations that are clearly not their own cannot be sustained. It is a sanction that does not meet constitutional standards as laid forth in the First Amendment and in subsequent court decisions interpreting the standard. While the Student Senate is a separate corporate body from the University of Rhode Island, it still derives its authority and resources from the University and the Board of Governors for Higher Education, both of which are public bodies.

You are hereby directed, therefore, that you may not impose any sanctions on the College Republicans, or any other student group, that requires them to make public statements which are not their own.

C: Vice President Tom Dougan