

January 16, 2019

Mary Zoeller
Program Officer, Policy Reform
Foundation for Individual Rights in Education (FIRE)
510 Walnut Street, suite 1250
Philadelphia, PA 19106

Dear Ms. Zoeller,

I write in response to your recent letter to President Austin, who has asked me to respond on behalf of the university. We thank you for your letter and for raising your concerns.

The University of Southern California strongly supports the free speech rights of our students, and this extends to campus demonstrations.

The policy that you cite was intended to prevent conflicts over popular outdoor areas and to ensure for adequate staffing; that is, if students know of an event in advance, a two-week notification would allow for better planning to ensure the availability of specific spaces, as well as necessary safety and security resources.

Given that the current language appears to have raised concerns, we will clarify the wording in the upcoming 2019-2020 version of the policy. Students will not be **required** to provide two-week notice of their intent to hold demonstrations.

As you pointed out, USC's Policy on Free Speech strongly states that "free inquiry and expression are encouraged and celebrated." We do not intend to go back on our pledge to support our students' rights to free expression.

I hope this clarifies our position. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,



Ainsley Carry, Ed., D. MBA
Vice President for Student Affairs

