

----- Original Message -----

Subject:RE: Science Education Fund / Friends of Science

Date:Thu, 15 Feb 2007 15:58:20 -0700

From:Roman Cooney (Email address deleted)

To:SourceWatch contributor name deleted, Janice Paskey (Email address deleted), Linda Barry-Hollowell, Q.C. (Email address deleted)

February 15, 2007,

SourceWatch contributor name deleted,

Your email was forwarded to me by Ms. Paskey for response. The University of Calgary has long-standing and publicly-stated concerns about Friends of Science using the University of Calgary's name to infer that it has the University's endorsement. Our response has included cease-and-desist directives to the Friends of Science from the University's legal counsel. Most recently, following a reference to the University of Calgary in a newsletter from the head of Friends of Science (as mentioned in your email) and under caution of legal action, I insisted that the Friends of Science provide the attached letter to clarify its relationship to the University of Calgary. Unfortunately, you took that newsletter reference at face value and repeated it before determining whether it was accurate. This "interpretation of the facts" was erroneous.

The University of Calgary does not provide funding for Friends of Science. There is no University of Calgary trust fund for Friends of Science. We do not endorse its work or its findings.

The University of Calgary does not have a position on climate change, nor would it. As an independent, non-partisan research institution, the U of C insists on maintaining its neutrality. If your interest is in providing an accurate reflection of activities around climate change at the U of C, you will take the opportunity to look all of the work done at the U of C in this area. Even the most cursory look at the scope of research going on here will make that clear that the University of Calgary is non-partisan on this issue. Several of our researchers have done internationally-recognized work on climate change; their work is also supported by private funding.

The fundamental principle is academic freedom. Because of this basic commitment to open inquiry, researchers have the latitude to challenge current thinking. You may disagree with their work, but that does not change the fact that academic freedom gives researchers the right to pursue their research interests. In this case, a group of scientists holds a particular viewpoint and have advanced it publicly, with funding support from the external community. The fact that one of the scientists is a faculty member here cannot be taken to conclude that the U of C supports that individual's research. The University of Calgary does not dictate to its professors the kind

of research they will or will not do. Research is evaluated by their peers, and broad consensus in the academic community is that the position is not substantiated based on the evidence. In fact, it is fortunate that the academic community does invite criticism and challenges to conventional wisdom, or we might not be having the climate change debate today.

Any information concerning administrative structures, spending and projects undertaken by Friends of Science should be directed to that organization. The University of Calgary is not privy to details of its operations.

Any suggestion that the University of Calgary has taken a partisan position, or supports Friends of Science financially or otherwise, is inaccurate, misleading and unsupported by the facts. We have made this point clearly and repeatedly, including legal action as necessary, to ensure the record reflects the University of Calgary is not affiliated with Friends of Science.

Unfortunately, the statements in your emails are incorrect and based on third-party sources and unfounded and inferred conclusions. Notwithstanding my caution, you elected this week to post information that continues to infer non-existent endorsement and support by the University of Calgary of Friends of Science. I am prepared to discuss a further exchange of information when I have assurances that it will be made public accurately and in context.

Roman Cooney
Vice-President,
External Relations