

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

September 22, 2020

Dear Chairman Nosal,

Last year, I was proud to receive an honorary degree from the Benjamin Franklin Institute of Technology. As both an honorary alumna and the Congresswoman representing the Congressional District home to BFIT's campus, I believe in the critical role this institution has played. As you know, many of the students who attend BFIT are students of color who are working full time, parenting, and managing a multitude of other responsibilities while they complete their studies. Your students include many constituents of mine who have borne the brunt of this pandemic – both the public health crisis and the economic impact felt in Massachusetts and across the nation. Now more than ever, our educational institutions are called on to stand in the gap – and provide critical supports for students and their families through this turbulent time in our nation.

Given this context, I implore the Board to ensure that any conversations about the future of BFIT include a robust community engagement process. It is critical that those who call this institution home, the neighborhoods where your current and future physical campuses are located, as well as neighbors, community partners, and other constituents of mine have an opportunity to weigh in on this process and offer their testimony and perspective.

I respectfully request that you respond in writing by Monday, September 28, 2020 with an outline of BFIT's plans to engage with community stakeholders, including plans to hold community forums while prioritizing the maximum COVID-19 safety and health precautions and other efforts to seek feedback and input.

I will be carefully monitoring these deliberations and my office stands at the ready to further discuss your plans for a transparent process that engages all of the stakeholders impacted.

Should you have any questions, please feel free to reach out to my Chief of Staff Sarah Groh. She can be reached directly at [REDACTED].

I thank you for your commitment to this institution and I look forward to open lines of communication and robust ongoing partnership.

Sincerely,

Ayanna Pressley

Member of Congress