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March 14, 2022

Dr. Heidi Macpherson, President
350 New Campus Drive
SUNY Brockport
Brockport, NY 14420-2914

Dear Dr. Macpherson,

I am writing you today to respectfully request that you rescind the invitation to Anthony Bottom to speak on the campus of SUNY Brockport. To give Mr. Bottom, who now identifies himself as Jalil Muntaqim, a platform to discuss any topic is wholly inappropriate, however, even more so to discuss his time as a “political prisoner” when he was in fact convicted of planning and executing the assassination of two New York City Police Officers. To give this individual a platform at SUNY Brockport is wrong.

Academic freedom in our educational institutions is certainly important, and having a discussion surrounding issues of diversity, equity and inclusion as part of the college’s 20th Annual Diversity Conference is logical, however, allowing Mr. Bottom to engage in this setting is mistaken. An email sent by your chief diversity officer states that a grant was given to bring this speaker to campus to “...increase respect and understanding for differences based on knowledge and shared experiences.” Having a convicted cop-killer share his experience with students is wrong. Mr. Bottom was granted parole simply because of the COVID-19 situation in the prison system, and Attorney General Letitia James appealed the order of his release on behalf of New York’s Department of Corrections and Community Supervision. In his hearing, he admitted that his actions were “cold-blooded murder, that’s what it was.” What type of message does it send to the college’s Criminal Justice majors, who will be dedicating themselves to public safety and law enforcement to invite someone who specifically targeted members of law enforcement for murder? What type of message does this send to members of the college community whose family members are members of law enforcement? What type of message does it send to the members of University Police?

I respectfully request that you consider these issues and rescind the invitation to Anthony Bottom to speak on the campus of SUNY Brockport. Please feel free to contact me directly if you wish to discuss further.

Sincerely,

Josh Jensen
Assemblyman, 134th District