

## LEGAL FOCUS

Dear Bureau for Private Postsecondary Education,

I am a Mills College student / alum / friend. I am writing to register my complaint, and call for an investigation of the proposed Mills College closure.

I believe the Board of Trustees took a radical and unlawful departure from the charitable purposes of Mills College by announcing their plans to close the College by 2022 and stating that their aim was to instead create an undefined, non-degree-granting “Mills Institute.” Under California non-profit corporation and charitable trust laws, the Board of Trustees is required to carry out the historic mission of Mills College, as set forth in its founding documents. Those founding documents require Mills College to operate as a degree-granting college for women.

The Board of Trustees has asserted that the continuation of Mills College as a degree-granting college is no longer feasible, citing financial strains, declining enrollment, and trends throughout higher education. Even if this were true, the Board of Trustees has not secured permission from a court or the California Attorney General to divert the College’s assets from its historic mission, as is required by law.

I request an investigation based on these facts:

- The teachout plan was part of the Consent Agenda. According to Roberts Rules of Order, this action allowed the Board to approve a teachout plan without discussion or individual motions.
- The College breached College Bylaws by denying Trustees documents and information to which they are entitled as Trustees; the College continues to attribute decisions to them that have never been made.
- The College leadership has breached their own obligations according to the College’s Bylaws, and have breached their fiduciary duties owed to the Trustees and the College.

Help us stop the lightning-speed dismantling of Mills College! It uniquely serves students who are misrepresented and underrepresented in both public and private institutions of higher education: students of color, first generation college students, non-traditional aged students, and parents who are pursuing degrees. Mills College was one of the first colleges in the nation to create an ethnic studies department in 1969, and in 2014 was the first women’s college to expressly welcome transgender and non-binary applicants—inspiring women’s colleges throughout the nation to follow similar suit in their own admissions policies. Mills has been the leading West-coast women’s college for 170 years!

I strongly support and encourage the CA Bureau for Private Postsecondary Education to pursue an investigation of this pending acquisition. CA Attorney Rob Bonta has recused himself from this decision. Your prompt attention is appreciated.