



President John D. Welty
Retirement remarks – August 17, 2012

I have had the wonderful opportunity to serve this University for over 21 years. Together we have accomplished a great deal.

Now, I have decided that this will be my last year as President of Fresno State.

I was attracted to Fresno State for the opportunity to serve an increasingly diverse, first-generation group of students and the potential to engage the University with the region. I believe we have made great progress. Our student retention and graduation rates have increased significantly as our student population has become more diverse. Our Smittcamp Family Honors College provides great opportunities for the best students in California, and our students and staff have contributed over one million hours of service for each of the last three years.

Fresno State has been recognized nationally for our engagement with the region. Our work has made a difference, though much more needs to be done. We are changing this region for the better in so many ways.

Our work has been greatly aided by the incredible private support we have received over the years. As we complete our \$200 million campaign this year, I am so thankful for the generosity of many of you, plus many individuals and organizations in this region – it has made our growth possible.

By the summer of 2013, I will have served as a University President for 29 years. As the first in my family to graduate from college, I have been able to live the American Dream. The most important thing that we can do this year is to make sure that we keep the dream of a college education alive for the thousands of students in Central California.

Please be assured that I will devote this year to doing everything possible to achieve a positive outcome for higher education in the November election. Once the decision is made, I will work with our campus leadership to bring as much stability as possible to our financial situation. This effort will allow new campus leadership to focus on continuing to grow and building our great University.

Following this year, it is my intent to continue to serve the California State University as a Trustee Professor for some period of time at a CSU campus.

Thank you so much for your support, sacrifice and dedication for these past 21 years. Let's do all we can to make sure this is a year in which we continue to serve our students while we put into place a firm foundation for the future. **###**