Dear President Freedman:

It has come to our attention that the Trustees, at their Feb. 19th meeting, expressed their unwillingness to grant additional funds for the recruitment of Hispanic students. Although this is a serious and discouraging sign, we feel that this decision does not in any way relieve the College of its obligation to continue the active recruitment of Hispanic students. Dartmouth's existing academic and support systems can adequately cope with this new constituency if only we would agree that admitting Hispanics to Dartmouth is a priority.

The 1980 census shows that Hispanics are currently the second largest minority group in the United States and will be the largest by the year 2000. By then, it is projected, this group will comprise 15% of the U.S. population. This percentage increase reflects the fact the Hispanic population in the U.S. is a young one. The median age of this group is 22. The proportion of the Hispanic population below 18 is much larger (41.5) than the non-Hispanic (28.3). The large number of Hispanics now between 10 and 13 years will undoubtedly play a significant role in higher education. Our peer institutions recognize this and have taken measures to address this cultural fact. Columbia's Hispanic student body is 6.1, Harvard's 4.9, M.I.T. 4.2, Cornell's 3.7 and Dartmouth's 0.9. Moreover, only 3% of Dartmouth's total financial aid package goes to Hispanics.

Insofar as Dartmouth prides and promotes itself as an institution committed to diversity and to preparing its students to be tomorrow's leaders, its track record in dealing with the Hispanic population seems both embarrassing and duplicitous.

Should Dartmouth continue to neglect its obligation to the Hispanic student body of all economic backgrounds, it will only strengthen the image many already have of the College -- that of a sexist, racist and anti-intellectual institution. The assumptions upon which the Administration's reluctance to actively recruit Hispanics are based simply prove incorrect, as the reports issued by CAFA and the Dean's Office attest, and the Administrations objections are grounded on faulty information. We urge you to help us correct this situation. Let's not leave the 20th century without addressing one of the very real issues that concerns us all.

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