

27 May 2009

Governor Bobby Jindal
State of Louisiana
P.O. Box 94004
Baton Rouge, LA 70804

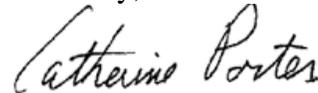
Dear Governor Jindal,

I write on behalf of the 30,000 members of the Modern Language Association to express our strong support for the continued funding of the Louisiana State University Press. We understand that the current economic crisis is prompting the state to consider a significant reduction in funding for the press—or even shutting it down entirely. We urge you to continue support for LSU Press, which we consider an indispensable national institution.

The members of the MLA are primarily college teachers of language and literature, and we value the excellent publications issued by LSU Press. These include outstanding works of fiction and poetry by the likes of John Kennedy Toole and Claudia Emerson—both winners of the Pulitzer Prize. The press is also highly regarded for publishing scrupulous scholarship on southern literature and history and on African American culture, among other fields. The MLA awarded its seal of approval for excellence in scholarly editing to *The Collected Poems of Robert Penn Warren*, and it honored Wayne F. Cooper with its prize for independent scholars for his *Claude McKay: Rebel Sojourner in the Harlem Renaissance*. Few university presses in the United States have achieved the distinguished record of LSU Press.

University presses are crucial to the scholarly communication system in the humanities, and each develops its own areas of coverage. As the only such press in Louisiana, LSU Press is the major publisher of scholarship on your state. Academic interest in the literature and history of your state is strong in our field, as is evidenced by heavy attendance whenever we hold our annual convention in New Orleans. Teachers and scholars want continued access to new publications about Louisiana, and we need a vital LSU Press to provide them for us. My colleagues and I urge you to maintain a strong and vibrant LSU Press.

Sincerely,



Catherine Porter
President

Copies to: Michael Martin, Chancellor, LSU
Astrid Merget, Provost, LSU