



September 27, 2012

Dear Colleagues and Friends,

I write with the sad news that Boston University's seventh president, John Silber, died peacefully early this morning. Many in our community knew that John's health had declined in recent months. In recent days, he invited many friends to his bedside where he said his good-byes and was, by all accounts, supremely lucid, wry, and disposed to laughter, notwithstanding weakness and discomfort. John died in the loving circle of his family.

Our thoughts and prayers go first to his family, including especially his children and grandchildren. Their loss is greatest and most immediate.

Boston University has lost a great leader. In the seven years I have served this wonderful institution, I have come to appreciate the magnitude of John's work. We speak of the University as a great private, residential, research institution with international reach. John—with the support of the people he gathered around him—is responsible for the transformation of a regional, primarily non-residential institution with minimal research and scholarship into the modern Boston University that is the foundation for our efforts and our aspirations.

There is much more that can, and will, be said when our community gathers to celebrate John's life. Please look for a communication from me in the coming days on the Silber family's plans for memorial events.

In the meantime, it is fitting that we reflect on the myriad ways in which Boston University has been improved by his long and dedicated service. John was mindful that universities are built to endure and that, to serve responsibly, their leaders must look well beyond the horizon of their own tenure and indeed their own lives.

We are forever in his debt.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of the letters "R" and "A" in a stylized, cursive script.

Robert A. Brown