

MEMORANDUM

October 22, 2019

Dear FIU family,

Today, the National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB) held a public board meeting on the probable cause of the March 15, 2018 pedestrian bridge collapse and made safety recommendations arising from its investigation.

The NTSB concluded that the probable cause of the collapse was the design. Compounding this tragedy was the fact that the design errors were not caught by an independent peer review. The NTSB was critical of all parties, including FIU, for not closing the road given the magnitude of the cracks on the bridge.

It is a difficult day for the families who lost loved ones in the bridge accident and those who were injured. Our university community mourns for all who perished or were hurt in this senseless tragedy. This must never happen again.

We are grateful to all those who have helped in the recovery and healing since that tragic day – thank you for all that you have done.

We also appreciate the NTSB's work over the past 19 months to determine what caused the bridge to fail and how something like this can be prevented in the future.

FIU is committed to transparency and accountability. As a party to the investigation, we were limited in what information we could share, and we always observed the NTSB's rules with regard to commenting publicly on matters associated with the bridge, as promised. FIU cooperated fully and promptly throughout the investigation and provided all information requested by the NTSB during the course of the investigation.

FIU intended for the pedestrian bridge to connect our community with the City of Sweetwater and provide safe passage for students and residents. We awarded a Design-Build contract through a competitive, public process following federal and state laws and regulations. As is typical with these projects, we relied on qualified professionals who were retained to design, build and inspect the bridge to notify us of any safety concerns.

The health and safety of our students, faculty, staff and local community are our top priorities. We are heartbroken that the road was not closed and are committed to doing our part to help prevent something similar from happening again.

Looking to the future, the need for a safe link between our campus and the City of Sweetwater is increasing every day. The number of students living on the

other side of 8<sup>th</sup> Street is expected to double, and a pedestrian bridge is needed for the more than 3,000 students who must cross 8<sup>th</sup> Street safely several times a day.

To address this, FIU does intend to build a new bridge where the victims will be memorialized as part of the UniversityCity Prosperity Project. We will keep the community updated on these plans.

We have shown the strength of our community and the entire FIU family, and I continue to be in awe at our ability to support one another through difficult times. Thank you.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Mark B. Rosenberg', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Mark B. Rosenberg  
President