

News

MSU Board of Trustees, Simon ask AG to review university's Nassar actions

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Michigan State University President Lou Anna K. Simon attends a MSU Board of Trustees meeting Friday, Feb. 17, 2017. (Lauren Gibbons | MLive)



By [Emily Lawler | elawler@mlive.com](#)

Update:

EAST LANSING, MI -- The Michigan State University Board of Trustees in a letter released this morning asked Attorney General Bill Schuette to undertake a review of the university's handling of ex-Dr. Larry Nassar.

Nassar, who worked at the university for years, pleaded guilty to 10 counts of criminal sexual conduct in two counties. More than 100 victims are speaking or having their statements read at his sentencing hearing this week, which is ongoing.

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Many of those victims have spoken about the harm caused by not just Nassar, but the university as well.

The board, moved by the hearings, requested the review.

"After watching many of these heartbreaking statements and reading accounts about them, we have concluded that only a review by your office can resolve the questions in a way that the victims, their families, and the public will deem satisfactory and that will help all those affected by Nassar's horrible crimes to heal," the board wrote in a letter to Schuette.

The board said it has heard the sentiment that it was not being transparent or participating in a cover-up, and that is not true.

MSU President Lou Anna K. Simon, whose ouster House and Senate leaders are calling for, is also requesting a review.

"The testimony of Nassar's victims this week made many of us, including me, listen to the survivors and the community in a different way. It is clear to the Board and me that a review by the Attorney General's Office can provide the answers people need. As I

told the Attorney General in December, MSU will fully cooperate with any inquiry by law enforcement authorities. I hope this review will help the survivors and the entire MSU community heal and move forward," she said in a statement.

MSU undertook an internal investigation from U.S. Attorney Patrick Fitzgerald over its handling of the case, but did not release its results to the Attorney General when he requested it.

The Attorney General's office, which has previously declined to say whether it is investigating the university or not, did not immediately respond to a request for comment on this story.

Attorney General Bill Schuette, who gave a radio interview this morning on WJR when the news of the board's letter was announced, said a review, report and recommendations on what happened at MSU will be forthcoming, but he didn't want to upstage the victims testifying in court his week with any announcements.

"Let's not upstage the victims because the MSU Board has woken up to their problems," he said on the radio.

The Board and president join a growing chorus of people who have asked the Attorney General to investigate, including Democratic Attorney General Candidate Pat Miles and Republican Attorney General candidates Tonya Schuitmaker and Tom Leonard. Democratic candidate for Governor Gretchen Whitmer has called for an investigation and Simon's resignation.

Legislative leaders have also tossed around the idea of oversight hearings, but have made no formal moves on that front.

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