

January 9, 1985

Dr. John F. Due  
Chair, Senate Committee on  
Honorary Degrees  
University of Illinois  
496 Commerce West  
1206 South Sixth Street

Dear John,

I would like to endorse the nomination of Mr. Norman Latker for an honorary doctorate from the University of Illinois. Mr. Latker has been nominated for his leadership and pivotal role in clearing the way for development of the many discoveries made in research supported by federal funds. The importance of innovation and technical change to the national economy, welfare and defense is widely acknowledged. It is a complex area and one in which there is not often opportunity to have unequivocal and significant impact. Norman Latker's efforts have been singularly effective in reshaping federal policy on the matter of the handling of patents on inventions made under federal sponsorship. Mr. Latker recognized very early the nature of the problem in the federal policy, worked creatively and tirelessly to develop a climate and incentives for change, persisted through years of discouragement and even personal hardship because of his championship for this cause, and ultimately was reinstated with a rallying of support to his unswerving vision for change.

I believe the University of Illinois should be extremely proud of its graduate. He demonstrates some of the very best of the qualities we hope to instill in our students. He has made a substantial contribution to public administration at the national level and, even more importantly, has opened the door for the burgeoning university-industry relationships now developing all over the country. As an institution which has participated heavily in federally sponsored research for many years, and an institution which houses a brilliant and inventive faculty, Mr. Latker's contributions in the area of federal policy and public administration pay special dividends. Recognizing his contribution by way of an honorary degree would signal our appreciation to him. I think awarding this honor to Norman Latker at this time is also important as this university is embarking on new relationships with industry, is seeking to assist the state in developing its economy through its research efforts. I therefore heartily endorse the nomination of Mr. Latker and urge that it be given very careful consideration.

Sincerely,

Linda S. Wilson  
Associate Vice Chancellor for Research  
Associate Dean, The Graduate College

bcc: Thornton Parker