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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Statement from ABOR Chair Bill Ridenour Regarding Termination of UA Coach Rich Rodriguez

“As chair of the Arizona Board of Regents, I support the decision of University of Arizona President Robert Robbins and UA Director of Athletics Dave Heeke to terminate the contract of Coach Rich Rodriguez. The decision reinforces the board’s high expectations for leadership on and off the field, and underscores the UA’s commitment to its core values and the UA family.

As a proud UA Wildcat, I am saddened that any actions or decisions could adversely impact the climate and direction of the outstanding UA football team and family, which is beloved by an immense and loyal fan base around the world. I am an ardent fan of our college sports and UA athletics, and the athletic programs of our state’s public universities are major vehicles to showcase our universities to the world.

If the Arizona Board of Regents is going to continue to approve these multi-year athletic contracts, we must be sure the process is transparent and accountable to the public. I have recently directed board staff to review multiple-year policies and guidelines to determine opportunities to ensure greater transparency and accountability in the process.

We must strive to create and maintain a culture in intercollegiate athletics that places a premium on leadership, integrity and support for students at all levels. I am very empathetic to the public concern about costly buyouts of coaching contracts and am hopeful that future contracts include mitigation clauses to avert such buyouts. These coaching contracts are complex, and although to be competitive the salaries for coaches are high, it is important for the public to have confidence in our process. That will be a focus of discussion for the board going forward.”

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