



October 20, 2016

Syed Hasan
President, Global Sales
SpringerNature
One New York Plaza, Suite 4500
New York, NY 10004-1562

Dear Syed:

I am writing on behalf of the members of the Big Ten Academic Alliance (BTAA) to express our collective concerns over a number of issues related to our business with SpringerNature. We have been working with staff within the newly formed company for over a year to consider the best options for content that will bring the most benefit to our faculty, researchers and students. However, our members have also been deeply dissatisfied with the level of customer support provided, errors still unresolved and pricing structures for newly published titles.

The BTAA currently has two licenses still in effect for SpringerNature content. Our license with Springer for ejournal and ebook content goes through December 2018 and the license for Nature runs through September 2017. We indicated to our SpringerNature representatives in September that we intended to renew our Nature agreement for 2017 under the existing license. However, our member libraries have experienced loss of content and we still have not received an invoice for the renewal. In addition, the BTAA received price quotes for the five new Nature titles to be launched in 2017. This represents a significant increase in publishing output by Nature and the pricing was significantly higher than previous Nature new start titles. The BTAA asked for a review of the price quote and associated banding, which has been problematic for some time. We have not received a response to our request and the BTAA members will not be subscribing to any of the new Nature journals.

With the merger of the two companies, SpringerNature created six additional ebook subject packages beginning in 2016. The BTAA currently has a license for all English/International ebooks. However, Springer imprint ebooks were redistributed among the existing and new subject collections and intermingled with Palgrave ebook content. The result is that our members no longer have a complete Springer ebook collection. Due to an error at SpringerNature, a number of our libraries had access to the new collections enabled without approval or charge. Once the error was discovered, SpringerNature asked that the participating libraries pay for the additional 2016 content in order to continue access. The BTAA members in the license do not plan to purchase the additional access for 2016 or the new subject collections for 2017, however we do expect access to all the 2017 Springer imprints that fall under our preexisting multiyear agreement. Additionally, the libraries have indicated that they do not plan to purchase any additional Springer Book Archive content until a new license is in place.

In July 2016, the BTAA submitted a Text and Data Mining Amendment to SpringerNature. Many of our member libraries tried to open discussions with Springer to negotiate their own agreements based on



pressing needs from their campus communities. Springer urged the BTAA office to execute a single amendment on behalf of the members and as yet we have had no response to the Amendment submitted three months ago.

It is critical to address these issues in order for the BTAA libraries to move forward with negotiations for a new license for SpringerNature content. We value the partnership that we have with SpringerNature and the value that your content provides for our faculty, researchers and students. As a follow-up to this letter, we invite you to meet with Big Ten Academic Alliance members in Chicago or another location as soon as schedules permit. We welcome a dialogue to explore these issues of concern.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Kimberly L. Armstrong".

Kimberly L. Armstrong
Director, Big Ten Academic Alliance Library Initiatives