

April 1, 2020

Dear Dr. Haili He,

I have been following the developments associated with the renewal of Dr. Calla Wiemer's contract as Editor-in-Chief of the *Journal of Asian Economics (JAE)*, and I am dismayed to hear that you are not planning to extend the appointment beyond this calendar year. When we met with you in January 2020 at the American Economic Association (AEA) meetings, I expressed my opinion that Ms. Wiemer has been an outstanding Editor-in-Chief, notably working to improve the quality of the journal as measured by citations, and even getting the journal included in the Social Sciences Citation Index (SSCI) in 2018 after previous attempts failed. Further, I regard Ms. Wiemer as the best person to continue leading the journal into greater things, and with her at the helm the *JAE* will have a robust future. I have been following the contract issues since before you arrived on the scene, having participated in meetings in January of 2019 and considerable correspondence throughout 2018. I have thus had plenty of time to think about the situation, and it will not come as a surprise to anyone at Elsevier that I think terminating Ms. Wiemer's contract will be detrimental to the *JAE*, and quite possibly a death sentence for it. The *Journal of Asian Economics* will lose the affiliation with the American Committee on Asian Economic Studies (ACAES), and without this institutional support and its activities Elsevier will be faced with the prospect of re-launching the *JAE* from scratch.

If Ms. Wiemer's contract is not renewed, I will immediately resign as an Associate Editor of the *Journal of Asian Economics*, after 13 years of service. I don't see any point in continuing an association with a journal that will be struggling and suffering for the next several years. I look back on my service to the *JAE* with great satisfaction because I have traveled the long road the journal has followed to become the pre-eminent journal in the field of Asian economics. Over this time, both Michael Plummer and Calla Wiemer worked tirelessly to ensure the success of the journal. I will be disappointed when the road comes to an end, especially since the detour you are taking leads to a cliff, but I see no reason to follow that road any longer. ACAES will continue its activities at conferences (such as the AEA) even without sponsoring the *JAE*, and I am sure we will continue to enjoy success in supporting research on Asian economics. I suspect other Associate Editors, Guest Editors, and Executive Editors will also resign their positions with the *JAE* yet continue contributing to ACAES' professional activities; indeed, I will encourage them in this regard.

In case there is any confusion about the contents of this letter, allow me to summarize. First, removing Dr. Calla Wiemer as Editor-in-Chief of the *Journal of Asian Economics* will reverse the rise the journal has experienced over the past few years (and indeed the past decades), and likely result in the complete demise of the journal. Second, at the point that you do not renew Ms. Wiemer's contract, I will resign my affiliation with the *JAE* to focus on other professional activities and my role at the American Committee on Asian Economic Studies, and I will encourage others to do the same. I hope you take these points into account as you decide the fate of the contract for the Editor-in-Chief.

Sincerely,

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