Dean Ira A. Jackson delivered these opening remarks at the May 28 conference:

Good morning and welcome to Columbia Point, the home of the John F. Kennedy Presidential library, the Edward M. Kennedy Institute for the U.S. Senate and the University of Massachusetts Boston.

As you see and feel, our campus is growing and rising. Sorry for the inconvenience, but it's the price of progress.

Just six weeks ago, President Obama and Vice President Biden joined us to dedicate this beautiful new Institute, built on our property. On behalf of Bill DeWalt, the Museum Director, I am pleased to formally welcome you as your joint hosts for this important concluding regional forum before the big White House Conference.

Bill and I particularly like the symbolism of our collaboration around this conference, as there are probably few if any United States senators more closely aligned and associated with the needs of senior citizens than Ted Kennedy.

And there were probably few if any members of congress who over their lifetimes did more to advance the cause of senior citizens than John W. McCormack, who helped to shape Social Security legislation for FDR back in 1935, and who was Lyndon Johnson's principal legislative ally when he was Speaker of the House 50 years ago when Medicare and Medicaid were enacted into law.

We at the University of Massachusetts Boston keep that proud legacy alive through our Gerontology Department and our Gerontology Institute. I hope you'll allow this dean a proud indulgence by letting you know that our doctoral program has produced 25% of all the PhDs in gerontology in the world. And that our Gerontology Institute hosts the largest Osher Lifelong Learning Institute in the region – and the first with a Stonewall LGBT Caucus. We also house a Pension Action Center that has recovered $45 million for seniors who were otherwise defrauded, and our Center for Social and Demography Research on Aging has produced a national elder economic security index and healthy aging profiles for every city and town in Massachusetts.

So we are thrilled to be hosting you today. We have a special competence in long term services and support and we stand ready and eager to assist you in shaping the agenda for action at the White House Conference and in helping to implement what I am confident will be bold recommendations.

Thanks for being here and for all that you do on behalf of senior citizens and on behalf of both the EMK Institute and UMass Boston, I wish you a great day!