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California State Senate

SENATOR
DAVE CORTESE
FIFTEENTH SENATE DISTRICT



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JUDICIARY, LABOR &
TRANSPORTATION

August 10, 2022

Michael Drake, President
University of California
Office of the President
1111 Franklin Street
Oakland, CA 94607

RE: Ending Bullying for UAW Academic Workers at UC

Dear President Drake,

I write to urge you to be a leader in the fight to end bullying at UC by reaching agreement with 48,000 UC Academic Workers represented by UAW to guarantee timely recourse against all forms of bullying and abusive conduct.

A peer-reviewed study last year found that 84% of graduate student workers and postdocs at major research universities surveyed reported experiencing bullying in academia, and 59% witnessed abusive supervision. 71% of those targeted by bullies don't report the incidents—likely due to a lack of recourse and fear of retaliation. These effects are felt more strongly by women and people of color, who are more likely to be forced off their career paths after experiencing bullying.

The recent news story about bullying and abusive conduct at UCSD is just one example of what can happen without adequate protections in place for academic workers. I hope the UC will move quickly to remedy this situation. The University of California can and should be a leader in the fight to end bullying and abusive conduct on its campuses and in all workplaces.

I urge you to create a safe work environment and to ensure justice for all workers by reaching agreement with UAW on their proposal to end bullying and abusive conduct at UC.

Sincerely,

Dave Cortese
California State Senate, 15th District