



ADAM B. SCHIFF
Member of Congress

August 25, 2022

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

Dear President Drake,

I write to urge you to be a leader in the fight for the rights of international workers and student researchers in the University of California (U.C.) system by negotiating in good faith to reach an agreement with 48,000 UC Academic Workers represented by United Auto Workers (UAW) to support international workers and provide funding to pay for mandatory visa fees that these workers must obtain to work in the U.S.

The University of California is the nation's premier research institute. This success is in no small part because of U.C.'s ability to attract and retain the most talented scholars from around the world. However, the University cannot live up to its stated missions of delivering world-class research and offering educational opportunities to all if it does not fully support international workers who come to work and help educate others in the U.S. on expensive visas.

UAW represents tens of thousands of international workers at the University of California who work as post-doctorate fellows, staff researchers, student researchers, and teaching assistants. These workers pay fees to the University and to various government agencies in order to procure mandatory work authorization to live and work in the U.S. This includes paying fees to the Department of State, USCIS, ICE, and the University of California itself. This adds up to hundreds to thousands of dollars in fees and unrecognized costs. By subsidizing these visa fees, the University would continue to demonstrate its commitment to supporting the immigrant and international workforce that it actively brings to the Golden State.

However, the University of California currently requires international workers cover expensive visa fees in addition to other costs they must pay to work in the U.S., including paying for housing, transportation, and basic needs before they ever receive a paycheck. This means these workers have to pay to work, a practice that is arguably unfair and exclusionary, particularly given the fact the U.C. actively recruits many of these talented individuals, and that the U.C. can and should eliminate. Covering these fees could be a common-sense step that the U.C. could easily take to address recruitment and retention and make the transition to the U.S. more welcoming.

UAW-represented academic workers power the University of California's research and education missions and are a major reason why the UC system received over \$3.5 billion in federal research contracts and grant revenue in fiscal year 2021.

I urge both the University of California and the UAW to negotiate in good faith to meet the needs of these international workers and make life more affordable for international students and scholars at U.C. Ensuring that we meet the needs of all students and workers is the only way we can ensure that the University of California is a U.C. for all.

Sincerely,

Adam B. Schiff
Member of Congress

Cc: Neal Sweeney – President, UAW 5810