

**Statement of Jason Rabinowitz, Secretary-Treasurer, Teamsters Local 2010**  
**to University of California Board of Regents**  
**March 19, 2020**

President Napolitano, Chair Perez, Regents,

In this unprecedented health crisis, which is also quickly becoming an economic, cultural and psychic crisis for our country, the University of California plays an important role, providing critical medical and educational services to our state. The Teamsters Union has a proud tradition of stepping up to serve the community in times of crisis, and the 12,000 Teamster workers at UC -- including 911 dispatchers, payroll and financial workers, hospital workers, skilled trades, administrative support, and much more -- are proud to work hard and do our part. At the same time, we need to ensure that our workplace is safe, and that workers' rights are protected.

We welcome the President's decision to provide two weeks of paid administrative leave to employees who cannot work due to the COVID-19 crisis. While this is a great start, it is becoming clear that this program will need to be expanded, because the crisis is likely to last much longer than two weeks. We urge UC to provide every opportunity to employees to work, so long as it may be done safely, through telework opportunities, flexible schedules, reassignments, and so on.

For those who can't work safely through these means, for example, because they are sick or quarantined, at high risk, caring for children due to school closures, or any other reason, **the Teamsters urge UC to ensure that workers will not suffer layoffs, curtailments, or other loss of pay and benefits for the duration of the crisis.** If UC were to impose layoffs, the results for UC workers would be devastating. The great majority of UC Teamsters, and many other UC workers, live paycheck to paycheck. We would see massive hardship among UC workers and their families, with many losing their homes, facing eviction, food insecurity, and loss of health care. Since UC is the third largest employer in the state, the economic harm would reverberate through our communities. As a public institution, UC bears a responsibility to its workforce and the state to avoid such an outcome. With its continuing revenue and its large reserves, UC has the means to meet this responsibility.

We also call on UC to give strong direction and closely monitor all locations and departments to maintain the safest possible work environments, including minimizing in-person work through telework arrangements; strictly maintaining social distancing, providing protective equipment, and increased cleaning services. Unfortunately, we still have UC workplaces, notably call centers staffed by Teamsters workers, that are not following these standards. In some cases, we still have hundreds of workers seated close together, with no PPE, no available sanitizer, and no cleaning services. Reasonable telework requests are being denied. These conditions are placing workers and our community at risk and need to be improved immediately.

We thank you for your attention to these concerns, and for the ongoing communication with the Union to resolve these issues so we can keep UC running as efficiently and safely as possible, while protecting the rights of the workers who make UC work.