



President Janet Napolitano
Office of the President
University of California
1111 Franklin St., 12th Floor
Oakland, CA 94607

April 1, 2020

Dear President Napolitano:

During the current unprecedented national crisis, the University of California plays an essential role, providing critical medical and educational services to our state. The 67,000 UC workers represented by the undersigned Unions – including nurses, patient care, service, research, technical, skilled trades, and administrative support workers – are proud to work hard providing essential services to keep UC running. At the same time, we need to ensure that our workplace is safe, and that workers’ rights and livelihood are protected.

We welcome your decision to provide three weeks of paid administrative leave to UC 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 given that this crisis will last longer than three weeks. As long as shelter-in-place mandates remain in place, the University needs to extend paid administrative leave benefits to UC staff at least until these orders are lifted. Additionally, we urge UC to provide employees every opportunity to work — with all appropriate safety measures — through telework opportunities, flexible schedules, reassignments, redeployments, etc.

For those who still cannot work safely because they are sick, quarantined, at high risk, caring for children due to school closures, or for any other reason, the UC must ensure that workers will not suffer layoffs, curtailments, or loss of pay and benefits as a result of this pandemic. In fact, the hundreds of millions of dollars the University of California is expected to receive as part of the \$2 trillion federal emergency economic relief package signed into law last week is to be used, in part, to continue to pay its employees to the “greatest extent practicable.”

If UC were to impose layoffs, curtailments or leave without pay, the results for UC staff would be devastating. The great majority of UC workers live paycheck to paycheck. Therefore, any staff reductions would create massive hardship for UC workers and their families, including many losing their homes, evictions, increased food insecurity, and the loss of health care. Given

that UC is the third largest employer in the State, the economic harm would reverberate throughout 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 large reserves, UC has the means to meet this responsibility.

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

Sincerely,

Kathryn Lybarger, President
Liz Perlman, Executive Director
AFSCME Local 3299

Pete Castelli, UC/Public Sector Director
California Nurses Association/National Nurses United

Jason Rabinowitz, Secretary-Treasurer
Catherine Cobb, President
Teamsters Local 2010

Jamie Dole, President
Joaquin, Vice President
UPTE-CWA Local 9119

cc: UC Regents
UC Chancellors
UC CEOs