

1 Resolution of Support for CUNY Cafeteria Workers

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3 Whereas, according to a report by the Retail Action Project of the Retail, Wholesale,  
4 Department Store Workers Union, workers at cafeterias throughout the CUNY system,  
5 many of whom are our own students, have reported poor working conditions, wage theft,  
6 failure to be paid for overtime, at minimum wage, and in some cases being paid cash, fed “a  
7 steady diet of low wages, few benefits, precarious schedules and labor violations”<sup>1</sup>; and

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9 Whereas, when a college Auxiliary Enterprise Corporation board changes a cafeteria  
10 contractor, current workers are often terminated along with their contract employer; and

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12 Whereas, in one case, a cafeteria contractor at four colleges has attempted to retaliate  
13 against its workers for taking collective action to improve their working conditions and  
14 pay<sup>2</sup>; and

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16 Whereas, Kingsborough Community College has just terminated the contract for its  
17 cafeteria vendor, Metropolitan Food Services, which has contracts at four other CUNY  
18 colleges<sup>3</sup>; and

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20 Whereas, one worker there asked a Vice President at the college to be retained as an  
21 employee by the next cafeteria contractor and was told that since she was not an  
22 employee of the college all that could be done was to ask the new contractor to grant her  
23 an interview; and

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25 Whereas, it is unfortunately common for workers at CUNY college cafeterias not to be  
26 guaranteed continuity of employment when a new contractor is chosen; and

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28 Whereas, workers at CUNY colleges are clearly at the mercy of their  
29 contractor/employers without protection for their rights by the university, and currently  
30 have no union representation to speak on their behalf; therefore be it

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32 Resolved, that the Professional Staff Congress expresses its solidarity with CUNY cafeteria  
33 workers and the Retail Action Project of the Retail, Wholesale and Department Store  
34 Union which has been organizing them, and supports their demands that all CUNY  
35 cafeteria contractors adhere to relevant labor and workplace safety laws, that workers  
36 have a right to continuous employment when vendors change, and have the freedom to  
37 seek union representation without threat of retaliation.

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39 Submitted by Glenn Kissack and Steve Leberstein, and passed by the PSC Executive  
40 Council on March 29, 2018

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<sup>1</sup> “CUNY Worker Survey Preliminary Results,” October 25, 2017; David Chen, “CUNY Food Workers Complain of Poor Conditions, Low Wages,” New York Times, March 29, 2018.

<sup>2</sup> Memorandum “Compliance With Labor and Employment Laws”, to Food Service Companies Serving CUNY, from Jane E. Davis, Sr. Counsel, CUNY, December 18, 2017.

<sup>3</sup> Email to KCC V. P. Ed Rios re retaining job.