

May 26, 2005

RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING A REFERENDUM ON JOB ACTION

Whereas the Professional Staff Congress contract expired more than two-and-a-half years ago, and CUNY faculty and professional staff have not had a raise for four years; and

Whereas the membership and the leadership of the Professional Staff Congress have tried in countless ways to reach a fair settlement: collective bargaining, direct advocacy with the City and State, organized protest and demonstration, informational picketing, leafleting, television advertisements, political advocacy with elected officials, support by national and state affiliates, informational campaigns in the workplace, and campaigns to generate calls, e-mail and fax communication with the employer; and

Whereas after more than two years of bargaining and member action, the City University of New York has failed to offer an acceptable contract: one that provides real raises, a lasting solution to the Welfare Fund crisis, and other essential gains in equity and due process; and

Whereas the failure of CUNY management to agree to a fair contract ultimately displays contempt for CUNY students: no amount of publicity about CUNY's recent "renaissance" can make up for uncompetitive salaries, shrinking benefits and substandard working conditions—the education of our students is jeopardized if the University fails to support the academic staff on whose work it depends; and

Whereas the PSC won its first contract, in 1973, only after taking a referendum on a strike, and the United Federation of Teachers won its 2002 contract after voting to authorize a future referendum on a strike; therefore be it

Resolved, that the Professional Staff Congress will make every effort to reach a fair contract settlement without a job action; and be it further

Resolved, that the Professional Staff Congress will continue to work throughout the summer to achieve a fair settlement – participating in good faith in collective bargaining, exploring options for mediation and arbitration, organizing protests by members, conducting a public relations campaign, working toward coalitions with other unions, strengthening member-to-member organizing; and be it further

Resolved, that if the City University of New York fails to agree to a fair contract with the PSC by September 1, 2005, the Executive Council of the PSC will have the authority to determine whether and when to conduct a referendum, either by campus or union-wide, on the question of whether the PSC Executive Council should authorize a job action; and further be it

Resolved, that the PSC Executive Council will not authorize a job action unless the majority of votes cast in the referendum, conducted by secret ballot by the American Arbitration Association or similar neutral organization, are in favor.