

Resolution on Michigan Legislature's Attempt to Muzzle Academic Freedom and Labor Programs

Whereas, academic freedom is a cardinal condition of academic work protected by the PSC-CUNY collective bargaining agreement; and

Whereas, the Professional Staff Congress wants to stand with our sisters and brothers in our affiliates and elsewhere in protesting abuses of academic freedom on the principle that an injury to one is an injury to all; and

Whereas, the Michigan Higher Education Appropriation Bill 5372 Section 273a decrees that *"It is the intent of the legislature that a public university that receives funds in section 236 shall not collaborate in any manner with a nonprofit worker center whose documented activities include coercion through protest, demonstration, or organization against a Michigan business"*; and

Whereas, according to the Lansing State Journal and CBS Detroit, the Republican members of the Michigan House inserted this language at the urging of the Michigan Restaurant Association after a University of Michigan graduate student interning at the Restaurant Opportunities Center of Michigan helped organize protests at a Dearborn restaurant that faced an unfair labor practice charge, since settled, before the National Labor Relations Board; and

Whereas, the bill's language is a direct attack on the academic freedom of faculty and students as well as their First Amendment rights to freedom of speech and assembly, the central values of any university, and particularly targets legal activity on behalf of workers; and

Whereas, Michigan Governor Rick Snyder has now signed the Bill;

Therefore, be it resolved that the Professional Staff Congress join our AFT affiliate in Michigan in condemning this blatant attack on academic freedom and First Amendment rights, and support AFT Michigan in their defense of academic freedom and continuing opposition to attacks on First Amendment rights.