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February 27, 2018

Trustees of The City University of New York
205 East 42nd Street
New York, NY 10017

Dear Trustees of The City University of New York:

As president of the Professional Staff Congress (PSC), I write to voice the union's support for a fully open, inclusive process for considering any consequential changes proposed for student activity fees at CUNY.

We have learned that the CUNY Board of Trustees is considering a proposal to restrict the way student activity fees can be used on all CUNY campuses, effectively diminishing the student role in making funding decisions and eliminating vital services and programs.

The Board's Committee on Student Affairs and Special Programs has resolved that "student and campus stakeholders be consulted and engaged in the process of review and re-design of the student activity fee." But student groups report that they have not been appropriately engaged in the potential re-design of student activity fees. They are concerned that the proposal under consideration represents an erosion of their rights and that it is being developed without their participation.

Students' right to engage in free speech and participate in self-governance—to decide upon, participate in, and organize the activities of their choosing—is a fundamental right that should not be abridged.

The PSC calls on the CUNY Board of Trustees not to diminish CUNY students' rights. We call on the Board to engage with CUNY student groups and student leaders before reshaping the rules for the student activity fee; to engage in a series of well-publicized public hearings held in accessible venues of sufficient size to accommodate true student participation, and to publish an explanation of the rationale for the proposed change.

All of us who teach or work at CUNY do so because we have a commitment to CUNY students. On behalf of the PSC, I urge you to honor the contributions students make to the life of the University through their organizations and to develop an open, inclusionary process for consultation with the CUNY community before making any changes in student activity fees.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,



Barbara Bowen
President