

To Whom it may concern,

Recently, the Associated Students are aware of the ongoing issues within University Residences. Additionally, we know about the list of demands delivered to university administration. The Associated Students considers this list of demands reasonable and accommodating to the needs of Resident Advisors. Associated Students Board of Directors is now fully aware of gross mismanagement of student employees within University Residences. Given the number of reports we have received, we do not believe this to be an isolated incident, but rather a systematic failure to address the shortcomings within the department. Furthermore, the nature of these reports has led us to believe that university administration is not only responding inappropriately to students harmed, in many cases, the university administration is the source of said harm.

Our efforts to address these concerns through the appropriate channels are confronted with dismissal, disdain, apathy and threats. We have gone through every tier of the university, short of the Board of Trustees, and the result has not changed: students are harmed and the university is not taking sufficient action to stop it.

We have been approached with concerns of physical and verbal harassment by a specific staff member at the University Residences at Western Washington University. However, throughout the year we have had an exponential increase in the number of student workers that have come to the Associated Student seeking help. Student workers expressed that despite reaching out to the Director of University Residences through email, with written testimonials and in-person conversations, there has been little or no follow through. Human Resources have also responded in a similar manner.

Throughout the course of this year, it has been brought to the attention of the Associated Students that apart from the concerning individual cases, there have been systemic problems with the way University Residences treats its student employees. Some of these problems are relatively new but many problems are years old and some even decades old. These problems cover all realms of University Residences, namely, compensation, training, security, duties, social equity and inclusion, communication and personnel and management. The Associated Students recommends considering all demands with a swift plan of when these institutional changes will be acted upon.

Since Fall of 2016, the concerns of student employees within University Residences have come to our attention, and in the recent weeks their frequency has dramatically increased. These concerns include, but are not limited to, incidents of emotional abuse perpetrated by professional staff towards student employees, workplace violence committed by the same individuals, improper governmental actions including gross mismanagement of funds, violations of labor contracts, unpaid labor, and disregard for the safety of student employees and residents. We have concluded that individuals committed these actions, and we are aware of their names. However, the University Administration as a whole protected them. Thus, the failure to protect students falls on the shoulders of the system.

We feel it is our responsibility to bring these concerns forward. The Associated Students Charter (2010), signed by the AS Board and the former University President Bruce Shepard, details the authorities granted to us by the Board of Trustees and the Washington State Legislature. Among these responsibilities are (1) promoting the general welfare of students, (2) representing student interests to the University Administration, and (3) fostering students' rights. We believe these reports of misconduct are relevant to all three.

The Associated Students of Western Washington University stand firmly in support of our student workers. Student workers have a right to working in an environment free of harassment and intimidation. Student workers deserve to be compensated for their work. Student workers deserve to be provided with an apparatus that ensures their physical safety. Student workers have a right to air their grievances with administration through other avenues when they are locked out of existing channels, student workers. Student workers deserve to work in an environment that fosters their diverse identities and perspectives. Student workers deserve to work in an environment that values them and sees them as an integral and fundamental part of the university structure.

We stand in solidarity with students and student workers. They deserve to work in an environment that celebrates them, values their contributions and helps them grow and gain experience and they move through this institution not just as employees but also as students. Western Washington University is entrusted by community members, parents and taxpayers with taking care of and ensuring the success all students

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