

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

August 4, 1998

Dr. Richard Atkinson
President
University of California
300 Lakeside Drive, 18th Floor
Oakland, CA 94612-3550

Dear Dr. Atkinson:

We have been contacted by the University Professional and Technical Employees local union, CWA 9119, regarding the situation facing the 3,800 research professional workers in the University of California (UC) System. Representatives of these workers have raised some serious issues during their visits on Capitol Hill regarding their relations with the University. We are writing to secure some clarification from you on these statements.

First, the research workers claim that their pay is as much as 20 percent under comparable industrial wages and that this situation is causing high turnover at the University, approaching 30 percent annually, according to the science workers. This rate of turnover has to have an adverse effect upon the quality of the research conducted in the UC System and in any organization faced with this situation, it would be cause for serious concern and remedial action.

Second, the research professionals state that they have received few cost of living adjustments (COLA) over the last few years, the largest being a 2.2 percent increase. In one year, they received a 3.5 percent pay cut. Yet during this period, multi-year grant applications have been routinely written, and federal funding awarded, that included specific funding requested to allow for 3 to 5 percent COLA's for research professionals. Given that the UC system receives such large amounts of federal research funding, this is a troubling allegation that could involve significant funds.

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These statements cause us concern and we would appreciate your response to them. We look forward to your quick reply and becoming better informed on the University's position on these issues as we deliberate what additional action may need to be taken.

Sincerely,

Bob Fisher

George E. Brown Jr.

~~James D. Hollander - Dr. James~~

Vin Tjji

Sam Lane

Barbara Lee

Kenn Tauscher

Tom Lantos

Howard R. Bernson

Pete Stark

George Miller

Additional Signers of UC letter who called after it was sent:

Rep. Sherman
Rep. Waxman
Rep. Becerra

Rep. Eshoo
Rep. Roybal-Allard
Rep. Dixon