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January 23, 2015

President C.L. Max Nikias
USC Office of the President
University of Southern California
Los Angeles, California 90089-4019

Dear President Nikias:

It was recently brought to my attention that non-tenure track faculty at the University of Southern California have begun organizing with Service Employees International Union (SEIU) and SEIU Local 721.

The right to organize has been a bedrock of U.S. labor law for generations, and it has played a critical role in building the middle class, growing our economy, strengthening our workforce, and maintaining fair working conditions. Unfortunately, workers attempting to organize have sometimes been confronted with hostility and retaliation. Others making the decision about whether to organize have received inaccurate information or deceptive advice.

Regardless of an individual's or organization's thoughts on whether non-tenure track faculty would be best served by unionizing - or whether SEIU would be the most appropriate organization to represent them - we can all agree that workers alone have the responsibility to decide these questions for themselves.

As such, I am writing to urge that the University of Southern California remain vigilant in protecting the right of non-tenure track faculty to decide whether to organize. Workers deserve to have complete and accurate information, and the right to support or not support a union and even the decision about whether or not to vote in the election should be made by the individual faculty member without the fear of intimidation or harassment.

I am pleased that the University of Southern California appears to value the importance of strong faculty engagement in making this decision, and I look forward to an open and thoughtful process that allows these workers to arrive at the best conclusion for themselves, their fellow faculty, and the University.

Sincerely,



ED CHAU

Assemblymember, District 49

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