Drop the Charges against UC Berkeley Student John Penilla

Whereas, the Student Labor Committee (SLC) -- composed of UC Berkeley undergraduate students, AFSCME 3299 members, and outsourced workers on the UCB campus -- fought and won insourcing for nearly 100 custodians and parking attendants during the Justice4UCWorkers Campaign (subcontracted workers were previously making half the wage, receiving little or no benefits, and did not have the same rights as UC workers who were performing the same jobs); and

Whereas, prior to the victory on March 18, 2016, the organizers of the campaign led an eight-month long struggle against the exploitative labor practices of UCB management, which included delegations to administrators, rallies, marches, forums, sit-ins, and finally a speakers' boycott; and

Whereas, this victory -- which has an impact on all unionized workers on the UCB campus as it sets an important precedent against outsourcing -- came at a price, which is the political prosecution of two undergraduate students; and

Whereas, one of these students, John Penilla, a member of the SLC, is facing unjustified charges of trespassing and battery after an action on March 2, 2016; and

Whereas, students and labor activists on the UCB campus believe that the targeting of these students is intended to suppress students' First Amendment activities and to discourage students from further organizing, and in particular from any student-labor solidarity on campus; and

Whereas, AFSCME Local 3299, UAW Local 2865, the Berkeley Faculty Association, and the Alameda Labor Council (AFL-CIO) have all adopted resolutions/statements calling on District Attorney Nancy O'Malley to drop the charges against UCB student John Penilla,"

Therefore be it Resolved, that the San Francisco Labor Council stands in solidarity with John Penilla and joins with AFSCME Local 3299, UAW Local 2865, the Berkeley Faculty Association, and the Alameda Labor Council, AFL-CIO in urging the DA and the UC Berkeley administration to drop the charges against Penilla and to put an immediate end to the prosecution.

Submitted by Olga Miranda, SEIU 87; Natalie Naylor, OPEIU 29; Rudy Gonzalez, IBT 856; Alysabeth Alexander, SEIU 1021; and Conny Ford, OPEIU 29; and unanimously adopted by the San Francisco Labor Council on May 9, 2016.

Respectfully,

Tim Paulson
Executive Director

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