



Seattle City Council

December 14, 2015

President Ana Mari Cauce
301 Gerberding Hall
Box 351230
Seattle, WA 98195
pres@uw.edu

Dear President Cauce,

We write to express our support for the University of Washington Housestaff Association (UWHA) and to urge you to meet the UWHA's reasonable demands in contract negotiations. The UWHA represents resident and fellow physicians, accounting for approximately 1/5th of doctors in King County.

We understand that this represents the first opportunity ever for these physicians to negotiate their contract since the University of Washington Medical Center (UWMC) opened in 1959. They have significant responsibilities (performing surgery, counseling patients, managing ICU patients, performing invasive procedures, and in some instances managing care for as many as 90 or more hospitalized patients overnight) and enable some of our city's prized hospitals to provide 24 hour, high quality care for our region's sickest and most vulnerable patients.

These physicians provide an invaluable service to our community and deserve to be compensated fairly. Shockingly, however, many of these physicians earn less than our city's hourly minimum wage. Some qualify for social services including Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF), Seattle City Light Utility Discount Program and even free ("charity") care at the very hospitals in which they work. None of them are able to seek employment elsewhere and must accept whatever terms and conditions the UW offers for the 3-7 years of their appointments.

We support the UWHA's request for improvements to their work environment, including a fair wage that recognizes their role in providing medical care to the people of this city and beyond.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Mike O'Brien", written over a horizontal line.

Councilmember Mike O'Brien

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Jean Godden", written over a horizontal line.

Councilmember Jean Godden

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Councilmember M. Lorena Gonzalez



Councilmember Nick Licata



Councilmember Kshama Sawant

cc: UW Board of Regents (William Ayer, Kristianne Blake, Joanne Harrell, Jeremy Jaech, Vanessa Kritzer, Constance Rice, Rogelio Riojas, Patrick Shanahan, Herb Simon, and Orin Smith)