



American Federation
of Teachers, AFL-CIO

January 23, 2019

Rudy Fichtenbaum, President
American Association of University Professors
1133 Nineteenth St., NW, Suite 200
Washington, DC 20036

AFT Teachers
AFT PSRP
AFT Higher Education
AFT Public Employees
AFT Nurses and Health
Professionals

555 New Jersey Ave. N.W.
Washington, DC 20001
202-879-4400
www.aft.org

Randi Weingarten
PRESIDENT

Lorretta Johnson
SECRETARY-TREASURER

Mary Cathryn Ricker
EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT

VICE PRESIDENTS

J. Philippe Abraham
Shelvy Y. Abrams
Barbara Bowen
Vicky Rae Byrd
Christine Campbell
Zeph Capo
Alex Caputo-Pearl
Donald Carlisto
Larry J. Carter, Jr.
Kathy A. Chavez
Melissa Cropper
Evelyn DeJesus
Aida Diaz Rivera
Jolene T. DiBrango
Marietta A. English
Eric Feaver
Francis J. Flynn
David Gray
Anthony M. Harmon
David Hecker
Jan Hochadel
Fredrick C. Ingram
Jerry T. Jordan
Ted Kirsch
Frederick E. Kowal
Karen GJ Lewis
Louis Malfaro
Terrence Martin, Sr.
Joanne M. McCall
John McDonald
Daniel J. Montgomery
Michael Mulgrew
Candice Owley
Andrew Pallotta
Joshua Pechthalt
Paul Pecorale
David J. Quolke
Denise Specht
Wayne Spence
Tim Stoelb
Jessica J. Tang
Ann Twomey
Adam Urbanski

Dear Mr. Fichtenbaum:

On behalf of the 1.7 million member American Federation of Teachers, I am writing to express our wholehearted support for the Wright State University faculty and its chapter of the American Association of University Professors in your strike for a fair contract and the teaching and learning environment your students deserve. You are striking for nothing less than the future of your students, academic freedom and your university.

Defending academic freedom and the free exchange of ideas on campus has always been a core value for the AFT and our higher education members in particular. The threats to academic freedom and educational quality are numerous, spawned by the growing number of faculty members being forced to work off the tenure track. And shared governance is another one of our values; it is democracy in action, ensuring that academic decisions are made for academic—not political, commercial or bureaucratic—reasons.

Your university is attempting to impose a contract on faculty that takes direct aim at all these principles, and we stand with you in your fight against it.

This imposition would unquestionably shift Wright away from full-time, tenure-track faculty to an underpaid and undersupported contingent instructional workforce lacking due process and the freedom to teach. The imposed contract would disable shared governance, allowing the university to exercise unilateral powers on issues such as faculty workloads and merit pay. Add in skyrocketing healthcare costs for employees, and the result of this contract will be a teaching force at Wright that is silenced, stretched thin, stripped of time for scholarly research, and desperately struggling to earn a living and afford healthcare.

Life under such a contract will not enable you to give your students the kind of high-quality education they come to this university hoping to find. It will not attract topnotch faculty and staff to Wright University. It will not leave even a shred

The **American Federation of Teachers** is a union of professionals that champions fairness; democracy; economic opportunity; and high-quality public education, healthcare and public services for our students, their families and our communities. We are committed to advancing these principles through community engagement, organizing, collective bargaining and political activism, and especially through the work our members do.

Fichtenbaum/Page 2

of the academic freedom and love of learning that define higher education and make such an education valuable.

Faculty have offered significant financial concessions to ameliorate a financial crisis at the university that you did nothing to cause. You have endured 24 months of obstructionism, with the university stonewalling your continued attempts to negotiate, and it has chosen to impose a contract rather than come back to the bargaining table. You have waited to strike until striking was truly your last resort.

The AFT and our members from coast to coast stand with you. We applaud your courage and your dedication to doing what's best for your students and your university. We stand with you in your fight to protect the essential principles that lie at the heart of a quality higher education.

Sincerely,



Randi Weingarten
President

RW:dd opeiu#2 afl-cio

cc: Martin Kich, President, Wright State University AAUP
Julie Schmid, Executive Director, AAUP
Alyssa Picard, AFT Higher Ed