

RESOLUTION ON THE ACADEMIC COMMUNITY AND CONVENTION HOTEL LABOR DISPUTES

WHEREAS academic freedom flourishes best when the broadest range of participation in academic dialogue is permitted and encouraged; and

WHEREAS labor disputes at hotels or convention centers serving academic conferences or meetings can restrict participation in the academic dialogue because many potential participants may feel a moral duty to respect a picket line or boycott by refusing to attend the conference or meeting; and

WHEREAS during the fourteen months that San Francisco hotel workers have been working without a contract, the following academic and disciplinary associations have chosen to preserve full participation in their conventions by relocating them away from the boycotted San Francisco hotels: Organization of American Historians, Linguistic Society of America, American Sociological Association, American Political Science Association, American Educational Research Association, and the American Anthropological Association; and

WHEREAS, in 2006, citywide hotel union contracts will expire in Toronto, New York, Chicago, Boston, Los Angeles, and other cities, resulting in over 60,000 hotel workers facing concurrent contract re-negotiations; and

WHEREAS, union representation tends to raise wages, supply benefits, and protect worker dignity, and can thereby benefit hotel workers, many of whom are otherwise disadvantaged by their socioeconomic status; and

WHEREAS, the academic community relies upon the labor of hotel and other service workers; and

WHEREAS, the total economic value of academic conferences and meetings gives the academic community significant leverage to influence the employment practices of hotels and the other service industries;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the AAUP finds that the academic community has a responsibility to act so as to preserve the integrity of academic dialogue, to promote full participation in academic meetings, and to ensure that those individuals whom it employs, both directly and indirectly, are treated fairly and equitably; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the AAUP encourages academic and disciplinary associations to take all appropriate measures to avoid holding conventions, or any other meetings, in the midst of any labor dispute. Appropriate measures would include, but not be limited to, the following:

- (A) adopting, as part of its standing rules, a policy of union preference in negotiating hotel and service contracts for annual meetings and for any other major meetings; and
- (B) adding labor disputes to the standard cancellation clause in any contract for convention hotels and meetings; and
- (C) taking active measures to support workers in any labor disputes arising at a contracted hotel, such that meeting attendees would not need to cross picket lines or violate a boycott in order to participate.