

Straw Poll Results

335 total votes

70 no - 21%

8 not sure - 2%

257 yes - 77%

Bay Area

13 no

3 not sure

58 yes

Davis

11 no

1 not sure

31 yes

Irvine

5 no

2 not sure

22 yes

Merced

5 no

7 yes

Retiree Chapter

2 no

5 yes

Riverside

5 no

15 yes

San Diego

6 no

19 yes

Santa Barbara

1 no

20 yes

Santa Cruz

4 no

31 yes

UCLA

18 no

2 not sure

49 yes

COMMENTS FROM MEMBERS VIA EMAILS TO KR

I wanted to express to you before it might be discussed or voted on at a council meeting, that I think this is a very dangerous stance for us to be taking as a union. It has only the most tenuous of connections to labor and is filled with language, although attempting presumably to be balanced, that could be perceived as dog whistles to our "actual" stance.

This is a heart breaking issue and undoubtedly many or most members personally want the release of hostages, a ceasefire, and humanitarian aid and medical assistance to both sides, including the hostages. We are free to personally pursue these political aims. However, it has always been my impression that the union is generally careful about political statements and political endorsements and tend to do so only when it aligns closely with labor and union related issues--and our priority should be labor. I think we could actually lose members if we sign on to this and it feels like something that maybe we are trying to do as a political "identity"/virtue

signal sort of thing rather than as genuine support and benefit for our valued members with connections to these communities. In that case, it would have been worded differently, I think.

I am not religiously or culturally connected to either place, so this is not personal, it is professional, and I don't think we should do this. It's a mistake, in my opinion.

Thank you for circulating this and for putting it to a straw vote. I very much appreciate the measured language of the statement as drafted, particularly its inclusion of a call for the release of hostages along with its call for a ceasefire. (I have seen many stances elsewhere that call for a ceasefire without explicitly also calling for hostage release).

I'm sure it must have been difficult to settle on phrasing that would be satisfactory to everyone who was discussing this.

I want to express my significant opposition to the Union weighing in on/taking a stand on domestic and international political issues. I don't think we have any place doing this as it is way beyond the scope of our mission as a labor union. It takes away energy and resources from our primary work. Furthermore, it could alienate much needed members. I was opposed when we considered supporting a particular presidential candidate and I am opposed now. I find it irresponsible and distasteful for us to take a stand on affairs in which we are not experts or qualified advisors.

In this particular case, this is a very complicated and heated/charged and divisive issue. In addition, there are many equally significant international conflicts (most visibly the unprovoked invasion and on-going war in the Ukraine and crisis with undocumented immigrants seeking asylum or simply a better life in the U.S.), as well as many, many other more obscure daily occurrences around the world).

I would appreciate it if you would forward this on to Union leaders and please copy me so that I see it has been done.

Best,

I wanted to thank UCAFT leadership for your leadership in keeping our collective labor organization and incredible members together despite times of great unrest and division. I have felt so proud of the way we showed profound strength in standing up for our shared humanity and for staying so clearly committed to protecting both academic freedom and our members from discrimination, harassment, intimidation and hostile environments. I want to share with you

all that despite agreeing with much of the content in the resolution, I voted no. I voted no for a couple of reasons. (1) I am concerned that these kinds of statements on global conflicts affairs and conflicts is outside of the stated purview purpose of our organization and I worry it will stoke further division. I question why this conflict and not others? Why not Ukraine? Why not Darfur? Syria? Taiwan? What responsibility will we have if we step into this space officially as an organization when we already protect the rights of our members to advocate on behalf of these causes... (2). A cease fire is not the only way to achieve the stated goals in the resolution. A ceasefire does not address the years and decades of past and future atrocities that will surely continue as long as Hamas is allowed to maintain its grip over the Palestinian Territories and people. There was cease fire on October 7th when they brutally attacked civilians, decapitated babies, and unleashed some of the worst sexual violence the World Health Organization has seen. There was a ceasefire when Hamas spent years and millions of aid meant for the people of Gaza on planning and arms for yet another attack. A ceasefire means little without a call for the international community to eradicate Hamas so the people of Gaza can build a free and democratic state as part of a long sought peace and any one of the many possible negotiated two-state solutions. It is for these reasons that I must vote no on this ceasefire resolution, even though I understand and respect the intent. I hope my union colleagues will understand that a no vote is not a pro-war vote. It is a vote to maintain our union and a focus on our shared humanity and the labor goals that keep us united.

Thank you so much for sending this out! I look forward to seeing the results of this poll.

I'd also like to very briefly note why I AGREE THE UNION SHOULD SIGN THIS STATEMENT.

I am a Jewish faculty member of [campus/department]. My mother immigrated to the US from Vienna, Austria in 1984. Members of her immediate family lived as Jews throughout the Anschluss of 1938-45. Honestly, that history has never been openly discussed to either me or my brother. The generational trauma of the holocaust was extremely formative in my mother's upbringing (born the daughter of Jewish survivors in the Russian occupied zone of Vienna in 1952), and its repercussions were evident in the household I grew up in as well.

The fabric of these realities have impacted my work and are evident in pockets of my research (which I'm happy to discuss further, if needed). My main point is as a rhetorician who is also Jewish, I've watched over these past few months as our generational trauma has been weaponized to commit war crimes against a collective group of Palestinians. This weaponization of our Jewish trauma not only strips members of my community of their humanity, it also replicates further trauma on Palestinians that can then be dangerously harnessed by groups like Hamas.

Please let me know if there is any way I could help further promote an endorsement of a Ceasefire on Gaza.

Thanks for taking the time to read this!

[FROM A MEMBER IN RESPONSE TO THE E-BOARD'S STATEMENT 11/14/2023 - THIS MEMBER SPECIFICALLY ASKED FOR THIS MESSAGE TO BE SHARED WITH COUNCIL]

Dear Katie, Dear All,

I read through the statement closely. I agree that our union has a critical role to play in protecting free speech on campuses and defending union members from all of the ways expression of political, protected, and human rights speech is penalized in this current climate. As a union member, I am writing to you with a heavy heart. Given the gravity and context of what is happening in Gaza and the West Bank, and the fact that the US funds and enables the military occupation of Palestine, at this time, our union should issue a stronger statement.

I am writing to ask that our union issue a statement that:

- reiterates the need for an immediate and permanent ceasefire,
- reiterates that the union will protect members who express political protected human rights speech
- alerts the public to the genocide in Gaza which must be stopped immediately,
- expresses solidarity with the unions of Palestine
- affirms the need for liberation and justice in Palestine
- conveys solidarity with university employees in Palestine who live and work under occupation, settler military violence, and bombings
- and calls for an end to the system of settler colonial apartheid and military occupation of Palestine

We can issue a statement in solidarity with the Birzeit University Union:

<https://mondoweiss.net/2023/10/birzeit-university-union-we-are-all-palestinians-in-the-face-of-colonial-fascism/>

We can issue a statement similar to other global labor calls for Palestine, such as the Alameda County Public Defender Union's very recently issued statement against the Genocide in Gaza, available here:

<https://laborforpalestine.net/2023/12/15/statement-against-genocide-alameda-county-public-defenders-chapter-ifpte-local-21/>

Given the mass bombings of everyday Palestinian life in Gaza, including at hospitals, schools, homes, entire blocks, and areas that were supposed to be for safe passage, not least of which include a maternity ward, and the tens of thousands of murdered and maimed children and parents, we have a duty to speak out. Given the deprivation of food, water, and electricity on a mass scale, resulting in, for example, surgeons sewing bodies together via iphone lights, and incubators running out of electricity resulting in the death of babies, we have a duty to make a more direct statement against the systematic US backed violence imposed on the Palestinian

people. Given the forced expulsion and displacement of Palestinians, and the targeting of journalists, we, as a union, have a duty to speak out. Certainly this email is insufficient to capture all of the reasons why we must speak out, as a union, on the grave and extreme atrocities in Palestine. Given the labor calls for solidarity with Palestinian trade unions, it is important that we too, stand in solidarity with those who most need our help and support at this moment.