

Report of the Vice President of Legislation, UC-AFT

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UC-AFT Statewide Council, 2023-04-23 (written 2023-04-10)

My Asks of UC-AFT Leaders:

- Please consider joining CFT's lobby day on Wednesday, April 26, 2023 in Sacramento. Information about lobby day is available at the end of this report.
- Please email me if:
 - You want to organize against UC austerity to pay for UAW salary increases
 - You are part of a Northern California campus, especially Davis or Berkeley, and you or a UC-AFT member you know at your campus would like to get more involved in lobbying and/ or testifying in person in Sacramento for worker rights and funding for public education.
 - You or a leader you know are interested in meeting via zoom or at the district office of a state senator or assembly member to lobby to increase UC funding, protect worker rights, or advocate on other issues.
 - You or a leader you know would like to join the UC-AFT statewide Legislative Committee.

Statewide Issues Update

AB 504

UC-AFT got CFT to co-sponsor [AB 504](#) along with the Teamsters and UAW. The legislation would create a right for public sector workers to refuse to cross picket lines, which would have the effect of superseding the prohibitions on sympathy strikes in the no strikes articles in all UC union contracts. Hopefully the legislation will pass out of the Assembly PERS committee this Weds, April 12, and we will get it to pass out of the Assembly Judiciary committee later this month as part of our work with CFT's lobby day.

UC Budget

UC funding has been inadequate for decades and is likely to continue to be so. Declining state government revenue following the federal government raising interest rates and cutting COVID relief spending has led to billions of dollars in cuts in CA state government spending, much of which Governor Newsom has directed at [clean energy programs](#). Though the Governor's proposed budget keeps a planned 5% increase to the UC's general fund intact, the Governor has proposed "delays" to hundreds of millions of dollars of line item spending for UC passed in 2022— including money to help UC Berkeley [convert to clean energy](#), to help UC Riverside and UC Merced expand their campuses (as part of [AB 2046](#) from 2022, which UC-AFT supported), and to help all UC schools build below-market non-profit student housing. In some meetings of the Assembly's subcommittee on education finance, Department of Finance staff have suggested turning these delays into cuts, and further pushing the UC to rely instead on the bond market for its capital expenses. There's also a possibility that the legislature might reduce the planned 5% increase to its general fund this year, as punishment for its not admitting enough in-state residents as part of the "[compact](#)" with the Governor.

UC Austerity and UAW Contract

There is a massive failure of political leadership taking place with regard to the issue of how to pay for the roughly 50% raises that roughly 50,000 workers represented by UAW are set to receive over the next 2 years. UCOP will not publicly admit that it has no plan for how to pay for the hundreds of millions of dollars it believes it will cost to pay for the raises that UAW negotiated last Fall. It also refuses to admit that campus Chancellors are already cutting ASE positions, replacing TAs with graders, and laying off Unit 18 lecturers to cut costs. This is perhaps because both the Governor and powerful state legislators have clearly expressed their opposition to raising taxes or cutting other spending to increase the UC's revenue. Both CUCFA and UC-AFT have testified before the Assembly subcommittee on higher education finance on the need for more revenue, but it's a cry in the wilderness at this point. UAW believes that UC should be able to afford its raises without any cuts to staffing, but hasn't identified where that money should come from other than drop-in-the-bucket executive salary increases. Chancellors, provosts and executive vice chancellors at multiple campuses have said that they are reallocating emergency one-time funds to cover costs of raises for 2023-24, but that structural changes to undergraduate instruction are looming starting with 2024-25. Unless we get much louder and much more organized, we're likely to experience significant reductions in UC undergraduates' opportunities for small class sizes and personalized instruction. The recent announcement that [UCSD is eliminating discussion sections for its biology courses](#) is just the tip of the iceberg.

AB 259 Wealth Tax.

Given the UC funding issues, CFT's longtime [support for passing a new wealth tax](#) seems more urgent than ever. However Democrat leadership won't even have a hearing on the topic, let alone pass it out of committee or put it to a floor vote. Even if they did everyone believes that it would be impossible to secure a $\frac{2}{3}$ vote (required by Prop 13) or overcome a likely veto from Governor Newsom. A resolution passed at the 2023 CFT convention to investigate the possibility of putting such a tax on the ballot in 2024, but that will likely take a lot of internal advocacy by CFT locals for that to actually happen. Even then [the defeat of Prop 15 in 2020](#) makes it hard to be optimistic.

Activity Report Since 2023/01/22 UC-AFT State Council Meeting

- Regularly participated in UCUC meetings and informal UAW-CUCFA coalition meetings to discuss and coordinate resistance to UC budget cuts and support for AB 504.
- Served as a delegate to the CFT biennial convention in March, and helped coordinate registration and turnout of our delegates to that meeting
- Successfully encouraged the CFT Executive Council to co-sponsor AB504, have been in dialog with CFT and with UAW-Teamsters about how UC-AFT can support the legislation
- Testified remotely at Assembly subcommittee meeting on education finance in February, would have done so again in March but remote testimony was cut off
- Regularly attended UCAFT eboard meetings
- Regularly attended CLF Labor Lobbyist meetings
- Co-author parts of weekly emails to members that Katie Rodger sends out on Mondays

Call for Participation in CFT Lobby Day

----- Forwarded message -----

From: **Adrienne Chukwuneta** <achukwuneta@cft.org>

Date: Wed, Apr 5, 2023 at 11:36 AM

Subject: Join us for CFT lobby day on April 26 in Sacramento

Dear Local Leaders,

As announced at CFT's Convention in March, CFT's upcoming lobby day will take place on Wednesday, April 26th in Sacramento. We urge you to join us on this critical day, as we lobby for our 2023 legislative agenda. You can register to attend by [using this online form](#)

Chief amongst our goals for the day will be to lobby for CFT-sponsored AB 938 by Al Maratsuchi, which would dramatically increase state funding for K-12 schools with the sole purpose of increasing salaries for both certificated and classified workers. As part of our agenda for the day, we will turn out for an Assembly hearing on the bill to ensure its passage from the committee.

Additional items we will lobby on include:

- Adding rights for classified employees to obtain more hours
- Improving the classified to certificated pipeline program
- Creating a state workgroup to improve classified workloads
- Improving student access to community college classes
- The Tax on Extreme Wealth
- Training for educators on LGBTQIA+ students
- And more!

We encourage locals from all divisions and all members of all levels of experience to attend!

April 26 Schedule

10:00 a.m. – Gather at the [California Labor Federation HQ](#) for training and dispatch

10:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m. - Lobbying training and lunch

11:00 a.m. 5:00 p.m. – Lobby teams visit lawmakers' offices

1:30 p.m. – Attend Assembly Education Committee Hearing for AB 938

6:00 p.m. – Legislation reception at Labor Fed HQ

Logistics

CFT will provide a meal between 10am and 12pm for those who attend. There will also be a light meal served during the legislative reception in the evening.

The day is set up so that CFT members can fly or drive up in the morning and return home the evening of the 26th. However, for those who wish to spend the night after the Legislative Reception, hotel options are included in the registration link. Please make your own hotel reservation.

Financial assistance

Financial assistance is available for locals on a first-come, first-served basis. CFT will fund up to \$500 for every other participating member who attends. Please let Steve McDougall know if your local would like financial assistance by emailing him at smcdougall@cft.org.

RSVP

Please register by Wednesday, April 19, [using this online form](#).

Thank you so much for considering joining us on April 26th.

In Unity,

Tristan



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