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*Chair of the Assembly of the Academic Senate
Faculty Representative to the Regents
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September 5, 2023

The Honorable Steven Glazer
Chair, Senate Elections and Constitutional Amendments Committee
State Capitol, Room 410
Sacramento, CA 95814

***RE: Assembly Constitutional Amendment 6 (Haney), as amended on August 31, 2023
Scheduled for hearing in the Senate Elections and Constitutional Amendments
Committee, September 2023
Position: OPPOSE***

Dear Chair Glazer:

Writing on behalf on the systemwide Academic Senate of the University of California (UC), we respectfully oppose Assembly Constitutional Amendment 6 (ACA 6) by Assemblymember Matt Haney. While the proposed legislation is well-intentioned and aims to extend certain labor protections to UC employees, it raises several serious concerns from the faculty perspective. In their opposition letter, the UC Office of the President has clarified why most of the proposed protections are redundant and how the missions of the University are compromised by aspects of the amendment. We too are deeply concerned about a constitutional amendment that would set a precedent that runs counter to UC's autonomy and also would hold the University to a different standard than other higher education institutions in the state. As chair of the UC Academic Senate, I highlight those aspects that will have a deleterious effect on faculty and other members of our academic community who they train and mentor.

UC faculty have various missions: instruction, research and creative endeavors, and public service. The framework developed for state employees that would be imposed on all UC employees under the proposed amendment is ill-suited to the unique type of work that faculty do and how they dynamically balance these missions. To a large extent, the same is true for our graduate trainees, especially those who hold teaching assistantships and research appointments and who must simultaneously, in their primary role as students, have sufficient flexibility to manage their academic progress. The instructional calendar includes ebbs and flows of intensity not only throughout the year but within a given academic term. Research and creative activity follow their own and various patterns, whether undertaking field or archival work, directing or participating in a performance, running an experiment overnight, and so forth. Faculty must also frequently adjust to unpredicted and unpredictable circumstances.

Under ACA 6, UC faculty and student trainees would lose the necessary flexibility to efficiently and appropriately allocate our work time, and that this in turn will have a negative impact on the University's research productivity and teaching excellence. The proposed legislation, impairing how faculty organize their own time and labor, would strike at the heart of UC's missions and at the entire faculty's academic freedom insofar as it will impede our ability to deliver our best work in service to the state.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in purple ink, appearing to read 'J. Steintrager', with a stylized flourish at the end.

James Steintrager, Chair
Academic Council

Cc: Academic Council Members
President Michael V. Drake
Provost & Executive Vice President of Academic Affairs Katherine Newman
Associate Vice President & Director of State Governmental Relations Kathleen Fullerton