



JEWISH COMMUNITY RELATIONS COUNCIL
of San Francisco, the Peninsula, Marin, Sonoma, Alameda and Contra Costa Counties

December 11, 2014

UC Grad Student Worker Union Vote Raises Concerns for Academic Freedom and for Jewish and Israeli Students on Campus

A joint statement from the Jewish Community Relations Council, the Jewish Community Federation and Endowment Fund and The Jewish Federation & The Jewish Community Foundation of the East Bay

The Jewish Community Relations Council, the Jewish Community Federation and Endowment Fund and The Jewish Federation & The Jewish Community Foundation of the East Bay are very disappointed to learn that UAW 2865 (University of California Graduate Student Worker Union) has passed a resolution to join the Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions (BDS) movement against Israel. The BDS movement is [anti-peace](#), working ultimately toward the end of Israel; it does not seek a peaceful resolution to the conflict with an Israeli state and a Palestinian state living side-by-side in peace, security and prosperity.

This endorsement of BDS stands in direct opposition to our nation's cherished value of academic freedom, attempting to block scholarly exchanges and collaboration solely based on national origin. We are gravely concerned about the chilling effect this will have not only for academic cooperation, but also directly on Jewish and Israeli students and supporters of Israel on campus, where they already face hostility toward expressions of solidarity with Israel. This could exacerbate an already tense and polarized environment while doing absolutely nothing to support peace between Israelis and Palestinians.

We are also troubled by the problematic process leading up to the vote in which students eligible to vote on the resolution were not given equal opportunity to hear from opposing voices to the resolution. For example, on many of the campuses, the union held informational speaker events presenting only arguments in favor of BDS and the resolution, with no opposing points of view represented. We will continue to monitor this situation, reach out to university administrators about our concerns and work toward ensuring fair and equal treatment for all students on campus.

We want to acknowledge and applaud the efforts of Informed Grads, the graduate student group that led the statewide efforts to oppose this resolution in their union. More information on Informed Grads, and their work on this issue, is available on their website: <http://informedgrads.org/>

