

## FACULTY SENATE RESOLUTION ON OPERATIONAL STUDENT EMPLOYEES' RIGHT TO FORM A UNION AND COLLECTIVELY BARGAIN

WHEREAS 1,100 operational student employees (OSEs) work at Western Washington University in a wide variety of roles essential to the functioning of the University, including as program support staff, recreation assistants, clerks, laborers, lifeguards, resident advisors, and more;

WHEREAS a majority of [Western's OSEs filed a petition on December 13, 2023](#), with the Washington Public Employment Relations Commission to be represented as part of Western Academic Workers United-United Auto Workers (WAWU-UAW Local 4121);

WHEREAS improvements to OSEs wages and working conditions through collective bargaining will advance Western's mission of inclusive success by making education more accessible to students from historically underrepresented groups;

WHEREAS the Faculty Senate of Western Washington University supports the right of all workers, including student workers, to organize collectively for their own betterment;

WHEREAS the State Legislature passed and the Governor signed in 2023 a bill (codified at Revised Code of Washington § 41.56.0215) to recognize the right of Educational Student Employees to form a union and collectively bargain;

WHEREAS Western Washington University lobbied in favor of the bill recognizing the right of Educational Student Employees to form a union and collectively bargain, and is currently engaged in collective bargaining with Western ESEs;

WHEREAS no principled reason exists to justify excluding one group of students from access to collective bargaining because of the type of work they perform;

WHEREAS there is legislation pending before the Washington Senate ([Senate Bill 5895](#)) that would rectify this exclusion and recognize the right of Western OSEs to form a union and collectively bargain;

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Faculty Senate of Western Washington University calls upon Western Washington University to support Senate Bill 5895;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Faculty Senate of Western Washington University calls upon both houses of the Washington State legislature to pass this bill and the Governor to sign them into law forthwith.