



Bellingham City Council

May 19, 2025

Western Washington University
Attn: President Sabah Randhawa and Board of Trustees
516 High Street
Bellingham, WA 98225

Dear President Randhawa and Board of Trustees,

Western Washington University is an important community partner. As the second largest employer and largest public institution in the city, the future of Western Washington University and the city are deeply connected.

As you may be aware, we, the elected members of the Bellingham City Council, are charged with ensuring a safe and affordable community for all, including the employees and students at Western Washington University.

We believe that the Operational Student Employees—the more than one thousand Bellingham workers who help the university function and meet its vital public charge—deserve a voice in the future of their work and the university.

While bills that would have required the university to bargain with these workers – HB 1570, sponsored by Representatives Joe Timmons and Alex Ramel, and SB 5119, sponsored by Senator Sharon Shewmake – did not advance this session, the university still can voluntarily recognize the Operational Student Employees.

These recycling center employees, resident advisors, program support staff, recreation assistants, lifeguards, and student custodians have petitioned for recognition with supermajorities twice. While we recognize you are facing economic challenges, we believe they should be addressed through bargaining to reach a fair and equitable settlement.

Therefore, we urge you to recognize the Operational Student Employees organized with Western Academic Workers-UAW 4929.

Best regards,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Hollie Huthman".

Hollie Huthman, President
Bellingham City Council
On Behalf of the Bellingham City Council

CC: Western Academic Workers Union- UAW 4929, Northwest Central Labor Council