



# UAW Local 4121

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September 18, 2020

Dear Councilmembers Lewis and Strauss,

UAW 4121 represents more than 6,000 academic workers at the University of Washington, including over 700 members across District 6 and 7. As you know, we have been paying close attention to this summer's work in city council to defund SPD and reinvest in communities. We are writing to urge you to vote to override Mayor Durkan's veto of the 2020 revised city budget. The budget, which you and the other councilmembers painstakingly negotiated with the input of so many community organizations, is not radical. Indeed, as we [wrote to you in August](#), while it is far from the 50% cut to SPD's budget that we and others have demanded, it is a modest start upon which to build. As a union, we know that the work to dismantle white supremacy in Seattle goes far beyond these budget cuts alone, but they are nonetheless a necessary first step towards prioritizing community-led health and safety for BIPOC communities. In addition, many of the cuts to high earners at SPD are simply sound fiscal stewardship that should be supported by all conscientious taxpayers.

Members of our union have witnessed first-hand the SPD's escalation of performative brutality against protesters, particularly people of color in the past few weeks. Durkan's veto to shield the SPD from the consequences of their shameful behavior is irresponsible and anti-democratic. In addition, the mayor's choice to counter-propose a budget after the timeline for city council to override her veto has passed is also irresponsible and anti-democratic. Do not allow the SPD and Mayor Durkan to make a mockery of the people of Seattle and its duly elected representatives.

We were encouraged earlier this summer when you stood with your colleagues and constituents to promise meaningful defunding of the police and reallocation of funds to community-led health and safety systems: *the central demand of the largest nationwide protest movement in American history*. We urge you to maintain your pledge by voting to override this veto, and by taking further action to defund SPD and invest in our community, including the hundreds of members of UAW 4121 living in your district. We look forward to working with you on this issue now and in the future.

Signed,  
UAW 4121 Joint Council  
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