

Contract Worker Justice Responds to SFU President's Johnson's Announcement Regarding Review of Contract Versus In-House Food and Cleaning Services

Burnaby

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For Immediate Release.

On Friday, September 10, 2021, SFU President Joy Johnson released an [announcement](#) that the university has hired the consulting firm Deloitte to conduct an analysis of in-house vs. contract-sourced cleaning and food service options for the institution.

Since the fall of 2020, the Contract Worker Justice @SFU coalition (CWJ) has been calling for an end to the exploitative system through which food and cleaning service work are outsourced on campus. CWJ is encouraged by the President's commitment, made in early 2021 and reiterated in the recent press release, to "begin work on a case for change" with respect to the precarious conditions marking low-wage campus work—conditions that are the direct result of the university's outsourcing practices.

CWJ also views the President's recent announcement as a source of serious concern.

Neither CWJ nor the union locals (CUPE Local 3338 and Unite Here Local 40) representing these workers were consulted in the lead-up to Dr Johnson's announcement.

CWJ is also confused by the decision to bring in a private consulting firm—the profits of which depend on outsourcing workers—to conduct a feasibility study regarding a policy which would bring an end to outsourcing work. Moreover, CWJ notes that Deloitte, the consulting firm hired by SFU, is known for a bias towards [privatization](#), as well as for its highly concerning [business practices](#).

CWJ continues to be deeply concerned by the administration's lack of transparency toward its own community regarding the contracts through which SFU washes its hands of a majority-female, racialized, immigrant, and low-wage workforce. SFU, a public university, has forced CUPE and Unite Here to file Freedom of Information requests to access cleaning and food services contracts—agreements which it will now presumably share freely with Deloitte.

While CWJ applauds Dr. Johnson's Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion agenda, our coalition urges the President to make this agenda count where it matters the most: with the most economically vulnerable members of the SFU community. How is it that EDI is viewed as an obviously positive goal when it comes to faculty, but one that must be subject to a cost-benefit analysis for the lowest paid and most precarious workers on campus?

This is not a matter of cost, but of basic justice and decency. SFU can and must do better by its low-wage workforce.

Contract Worker Justice @SFU is a coalition of SFU workers, faculty, students and community members fighting to end the outsourcing of food and cleaning services at SFU.