



ASUC
Associated Students
UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA

November 15, 2018

Office of the Chancellor
University of California, Berkeley
200 California Hall # 1500
Berkeley, CA 94720
Re: Air Quality Emergency at UC Berkeley

Chancellor Christ,

On behalf of the Associated Students of the University of California, we are writing to express concern over the current quality of Berkeley's air as a result of the 2018 Camp Fire. As of November 15th, the local air quality index (AQI) is 192. According to the EPA, AQI between 151 and 200 is considered unhealthy. The next two days are predicted to have AQI numbers of 200-300+ due to the direction of the winds.

We are disappointed by the University of California, Berkeley administration's insufficient response to these public health risks. The Tang Center is both ill-equipped and ill-prepared to support and protect students in these conditions. Students need particulate respirators (rated N-95 or greater) in order to best protect their lungs from the wildfire smoke. When addressing the ASUC Senate, VCSA Stephen Sutton indicated that there is currently no plan to restock their mask supply at the Tang Center. Considering the diversity of effects these air quality concerns can have on our students, specifically students with asthma and lung conditions, we urge the Tang Center to prioritize these concerns.

In order to better serve the needs of students, staff, and faculty, we strongly urge the University of California, Berkeley administration to provide emergency funds for N-95 masks and mobile air filtration units for indoor spaces. Campus buildings are not equipped to filter out the pollutants making the air indoors just as harmful as it is outside. Many of our students have already been affected by the air quality emergency, and a petition of more than 10,000 student signatures is urging the administration to cancel classes until the air quality recovers.

Moving forward, as students at the University of California, we suggest that the administration and academic senate adopts campus-wide standards for air quality and outlines a clear plan of action should another public health emergency arise. Currently, the Berkeley Office of Environmental Health & Safety (EH&S) has not outlined a plan of action for any air quality emergency, and this poses a risk to the students, staff, and faculty of our campus. Specifically, when AQI exceeds 200, individuals on campus should be provided with N-95 masks in order to protect their respiratory health while faculty should heavily consider canceling class. The EPA also considers an AQI of above 300 to be hazardous to public health, and we would urge the administration to close the campus, provide N-95 masks, and install indoor mobile units for air filtration.

We hope faculty members will understand the impact these conditions have on students in the coming days and accommodate any outstanding medical concerns.

Sincerely,

Alexander Wilfert, ASUC President
Hung Huynh, ASUC Executive Vice President
Nuha Khalfay, ASUC External Affairs Vice President
Melany Amarikwa, ASUC Academic Affairs Vice President
Nick Araujo, ASUC Senator
Zach Carter, ASUC Senator
Justin L. Greenwald, ASUC Senator
Saakshi Goel, ASUC Senator
Nikhil Harish, ASUC Senator
Imran Khan, ASUC Senator
Teddy Lake, ASUC Senator
Aaron Bryce Lee, ASUC Senator
James Li, ASUC Senator
Regina Kim, ASUC Senator
Idalys Perez, ASUC Senator
Amma Sarkodee-Adoo, ASUC Senator
Karina Sun, ASUC Senator
Andy Theocharous, ASUC Senator
William Wang, ASUC Senator
Anna Whitney, ASUC Senator
Amir Wright, ASUC Senator
Anne Zepecki, ASUC Senator