

CFA California Faculty Association

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May 5, 2006

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Clerk, Supreme Court of California
350 McAllister Street
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RE: No. D046471
In the Court of Appeal of the State of California
Fourth Appellate District, Division One

Pat Washington, Plaintiff and Appellant,
Vs Trustees of the California State University and Colleges,
Defendant and Respondent

Dear Justices,

The California Faculty Association (CFA) is filing an *amicus* letter on behalf of Pat Washington in her quest for a petition for a rehearing of the Fourth Appellate District, Division One case No. DO46471, *Pat Washington, Plaintiff and Appellant v. Trustees of the California State University and Colleges. Defendant and Respondent.*

The CFA Assembly recently passed a resolution in support of Pat Washington. A copy of the resolution is enclosed.

CFA along with other organizations including the San Diego Chapter of the NAACP, the California Black Faculty and Staff Association, the National Women's Studies Association (NWSA), Lambda Letters Project, the San Diego Chapter of the Peace & Freedom Party, the San Diego Concilio for Higher Education, Equality California, the National Association for Women (NOW) the American Association of University Women (AAUW), Sociologists for Women in Society, and WAGE have supported her struggle for reinstatement, back pay, and tenure. **We are urging the justices to rehear the case.**

Discrimination continues to be experienced by women of color in academic settings. CFA concurs with the evidence presented by Dr. Washington demonstrating that the Department reacted with anger and hostility to her complaints of racial bias. For Pat Washington, "not fitting

in” was synonymous with being African-American when everyone else was white. Pat Washington had been the only Black professor ever hired in the 33-year history of the Women’s Studies Department.

Sadly, race remains a critical factor in society in general and education in particular. Pat Washington was denied tenure at a time very close to the granting of tenure to a person with similar qualifications. Pat Washington’s complaints of racial bias were seen as hostility by the Department, and that was reason enough to deny her tenure.

Pat Washington is an internationally known and widely acclaimed scholar popular with students. She received the “Teacher of the Year” for three consecutive years and was fired only three weeks after receiving the award for the third time. CFA strongly urges the Justices to rehear and overturn the decision.

The outcome of this litigation will directly affect the ability of faculty of color, particularly women of color, to obtain tenure on campuses throughout the California State University System. Wherefore, the California Faculty Association respectfully asks the Justices to reverse their decision in this case. Reversing this ruling is critical to enabling people of color, particularly women to succeed at our universities and colleges.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "John Travis", with a long horizontal line extending to the right.

Dr. John Travis
President, California Faculty Association

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Resolution in Support of Pat Washington

Adopted by the CFA Assembly April 23, 2006

WHEREAS, Pat Washington was denied tenure in the Women's Studies Department at San Diego State University (SDSU) in 2002; and

WHEREAS, Pat Washington had been the only Black professor ever hired in the 33-year history of the Women's Study Department; and

WHEREAS, Pat Washington is an internationally known and widely acclaimed scholar popular with students; and

WHEREAS, Pat Washington had received the "Teacher of the Year" for three consecutive years and was fired only weeks after receiving the award for the third time; and

WHEREAS, there is "reasonable cause" to believe that Pat Washington was denied tenure on the basis of her race/sex; and

WHEREAS, the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) ruled against SDSU in favor of Washington after a fourteen month investigation; and

WHEREAS, Pat Washington's struggle for reinstatement, back pay, and tenure has won support from organizations prominent in the battles against discrimination and oppression, including the San Diego Chapter of the NAACP; the California Black Faculty and Staff Association; Lambda Letters Project; the San Diego Chapter of the Peace & Freedom Party; the San Diego Concilio for Higher Education; Equality California (formerly California Alliance for Pride and Equality); the National Association for Women; the American Association of University Women; Sociologists for Women in Society; WAGE—We Advocate Gender Equality; and the National Women's Studies Association (NWSA); and

WHEREAS, discrimination continues to be a fact of academic life for women of color; and

WHEREAS, the court's decision that the consideration and acceptance of personal feelings of colleagues as legitimate cause for dismissal places all faculty at risk;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that CFA supports Pat Washington's quest for justice and equity in the resolution of her case; and

BE IT FUTHER RESOLVED, that CFA supports Washington's challenge to the recent California Court of Appeal's decision granting summary judgment to the defendant (the CSU Board of Trustees).