

Issue

#16

GRADUATE EMPLOYEES' ORGANIZATION Mini BARGAINING BULLETIN



U-M STICKS TO REPRESSION, REFUSES TO ACKNOWLEDGE IMPACTED WORKING CONDITIONS



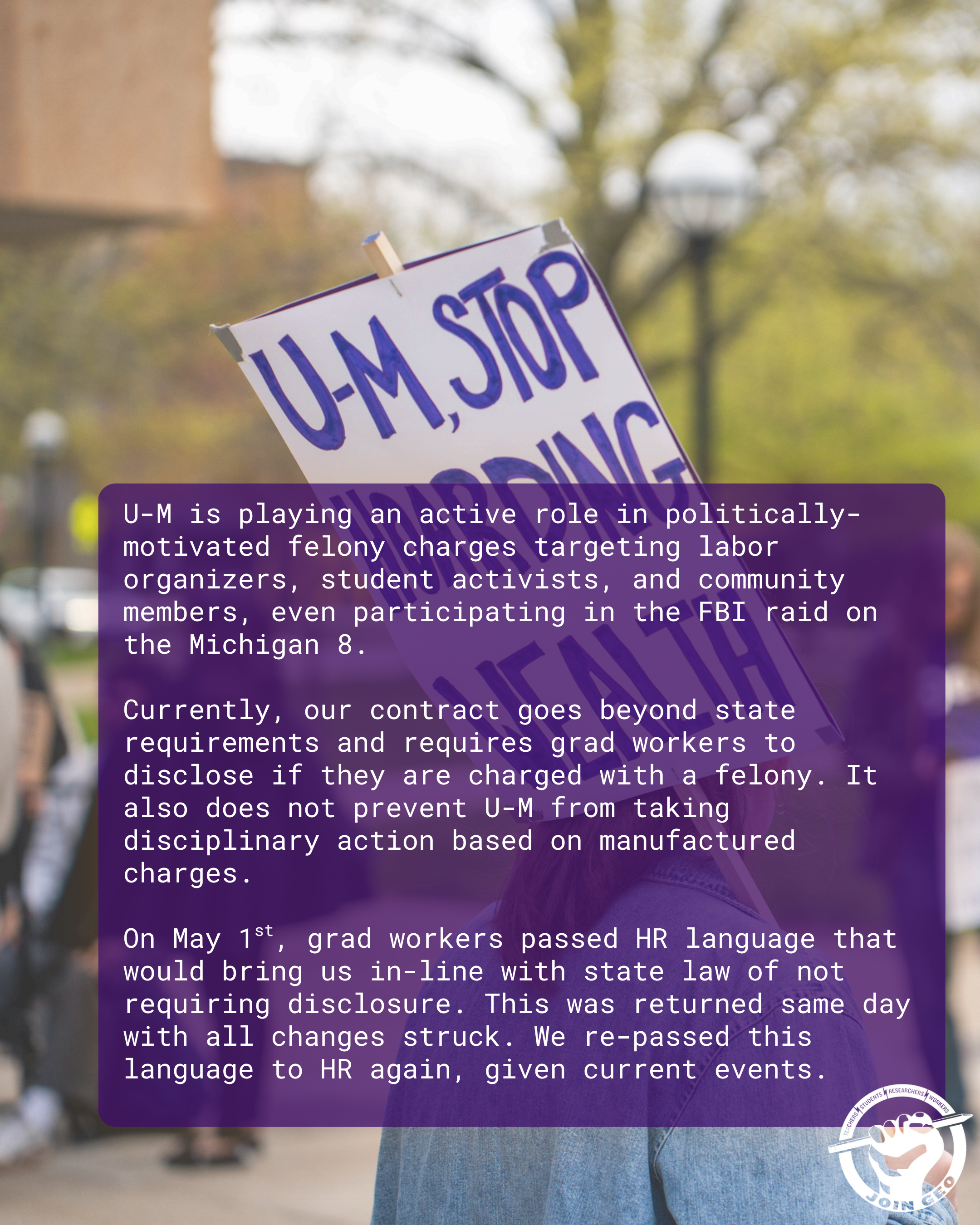
Last bargaining session, we heard testimony from students unjustly persecuted by U-M for pro-Palestine activism, questioned U-M on their role in Trump's repression agenda, passed language on the disclosure of felony charges, and received HR's lackluster counter-proposals on critical issues. Swipe to learn more, as we prepare for bargaining on July 17th!

A member of the Michigan 8, and defendant in U-M's repression campaign against the Palestine solidarity movement, expressed that the violent raid on their home and the politicized charges they face are all meant to paint student activism in the worst possible light.

"The university constantly fights to deny workers what they are owed. It is essential we stand together and fight for it."

If you are able, consider contributing to their legal fund here: bit.ly/umlegalfund





U-M is playing an active role in politically-motivated felony charges targeting labor organizers, student activists, and community members, even participating in the FBI raid on the Michigan 8.

Currently, our contract goes beyond state requirements and requires grad workers to disclose if they are charged with a felony. It also does not prevent U-M from taking disciplinary action based on manufactured charges.

On May 1st, grad workers passed HR language that would bring us in-line with state law of not requiring disclosure. This was returned same day with all changes struck. We re-passed this language to HR again, given current events.



Grad workers questioned HR about their illegal firing of an Architecture GSI, Philippe, which resulted in him losing his immigration status and being detained by ICE.

Despite a Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) request showing email records that HR lead negotiator, Katie DeLong, advised Taubman HR to fire Philippe in violation of the contract, she refused to comment. HR continues to ignore Philippe's lived reality of being at-risk for deportation, refusing to repair the harm they caused.

HR still refuses to bargain over immigration-related issues, which they claim do not impact our "working conditions".

If you are able, consider contributing to Philippe's tuition fund here: bit.ly/DetainedGradFund



HR Counter-Proposal: Anti-Discrimination

In their counter-proposal for Anti-Discrimination, HR struck our language preventing them from disclosing a worker's union membership.

HR suggested that Standard Practice Guideline (SPG) 601.11 already protects "personal" information like union membership. But the SPG gives U-M several mechanisms to access and monitor personal records anyways.

A grad worker's perspective:

I feel like SPGs are commonly invoked by the HR to avoid bargaining over important aspects of our employment, claiming that they are "redundant" to "protections" under the SPG. However, as I understand it, the SPG is unilaterally determined by the university, and not bargained over. That means the SPG can be modified and invoked to strip rights from us as workers without accountability to our union.





HR Counter-Proposal: Union Rights

In our proposal, grad workers asked for listserv access so we can effectively reach other workers. HR not only refused, but also took away hard-fought rights in the 2023 contract by withdrawing our access to bulletin-board space.

HR also restricted union presentations at orientations to once per year in the Fall. In discussions, it was unclear whether HR also intends to limit orientations to once per year, excluding term-based GSRA/GSI/GSSA appointments starting in the Winter or Summer. Regular orientations are important, especially for GSRA's who need to learn safety procedures and work processes.



HR Counter-Proposal: Job Security

HR struck our entire proposal on job security, which included a variety of new processes to protect jobs, improve immigration protections, and ensure academic freedom.

HR removed language that would provide an appeals process for terminated workers, while adding “misconduct” as a new mechanism for firing grads. HR also wants themselves and prosecuting faculty to judge workers on a grievance committee.

In conversations at the table, HR refused to acknowledge that U-M’s excessive disciplinary actions, such as banning grad workers from campus, impact our ability to do our jobs.



HR Counter-Proposal: Special Conferences

Special conferences allow GEO and HR to come to the table outside of the normal bargaining cycle to discuss important issues.

Because of Trump's attacks on research and higher ed, grad workers proposed that special conferences could be called in response to emerging government policies, and allow more than 10 speaking GEO members (+ observers).

HR accepted this if there is "evidence showing direct impact" of policy on our work, but limited our ability to speak and observe. Furthermore, HR is reluctant to allow special conferences to result in enforceable agreements, like the rest of the contract.





**SEE YOU AT:
BARGAINING ON JULY 17TH
@ 9:30 AM!**

Michigan League Henderson Room, and on zoom with
a watch party in Ford Robotics Bldg 1050!

RSVP: bit.ly/GEO-EVENT-RSVP

