

SAMPLE LETTER — PLEASE WRITE YOUR OWN IF POSSIBLE (E-mail it to hcecp@harvard.edu)

To the Harvard Committee on Employment & Contracting Policies:

As a (faculty member/student/alumnus) at/of Harvard, I am writing in response to your request for input to your study of Harvard's employment practices.

First, I want to underscore the importance of your work. As the first committee at Harvard that officially incorporates both workers and students as equal, valuable voices into a decision-making process on employment, the HCECP can and should set a powerful precedent for labor policy at Harvard that not only considers unofficially but actually includes the judgment of workers and students on our campus. It is only in this way that such decisions can be said to be made by an inclusive process.

Especially in light of the data recently released by the Committee, the nature of the situation is clear. Hundreds of service workers on our campus attest to the fact that no matter how hard they work, they can not earn enough to get by, a situation that degrades not only their own health and well-being, but is reflected in their sense of alienation from the University community. This not only deprives these workers of the respect they deserve but also brings shame upon our University. The seriousness of this situation demands five major reforms in Harvard's employment policies.

1. An annually adjusted living wage floor for all workers, designed to meet the basic cost of living in metropolitan Boston.
2. Accessible and affordable benefits for all workers including health insurance and education for all, regardless of whether they work for a contractor or how many hours they work.
3. Bringing outsourced service work back in-house, so that workers have job security and so that Harvard can more efficiently ensure their welfare and productivity.
4. Opportunities for full time work when desired, with provisions for seasonal employment (e.g. making other campus jobs available to dining hall workers during the vacation months when dining halls are closed).
5. Card-check neutrality: in short, not interfering with workers' attempts to organize, and bargaining collectively with them when the majority have expressed their desire for a union by signing cards - and requiring contractors to also comply with and respect this right.

I believe that the implementation of these reforms will be an important and necessary step toward making Harvard a fair and just institution that values the contributions and rights of all members of the community.

I thank you for your consideration of my views.