

# UCWAZ and ASA Denounces Universities' Repression of Student Protests and Free Speech



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**ARIZONA** - United Campus Workers of Arizona (UCWAZ, CWA Local 7065) and Arizona Student Association (ASA) call on all university students, employees, alumni, and the broader Flagstaff community to join us for a rally immediately before the Arizona Board of Regents (ABOR) meeting on Thursday, June 20 at 12:30 pm.

ABOR, an unelected board, is choosing to violently suppress our community's voices to control free speech they disagree with. The use of physical force, riot-control tactics, and [chemical weapons](#), to suppress peaceful demonstrations is extreme, unacceptable, and endangers all members of the university community. The police, sanctioned by ABOR and our university presidents, disregarded student rights and safety: [hijabs were forcibly removed from Muslim students](#), body cams were off, and ASUPD chief Michael Thompson destroyed private property with [a knife](#). The Court allowed the 25 arrested ASU students to return to campus and finish their studies but ASU administration punished them anyway, issuing interim suspensions and barring them from contacting their professors or returning to campus. NAU [attempted](#) to preemptively limit student demonstrations by changing its policy despite recently allowing Pi Kappa Phi to camp overnight, and UA preemptively threatened protestors earlier this year.

We call upon ABOR to provide students, staff, faculty, and community stakeholders a permanent seat at the decision-making table. ABOR must build and invest in shared governance structures so that we can address the challenges our universities face together. Moving towards this brighter, healthier future includes ABOR taking the following actions:

1. Overturn suspensions and prevent future punitive measures by the universities against students, staff, and faculty involved in the encampments and reaffirm protestor's rights.
2. Do not adopt or implement the [proposed policies](#) designed to threaten free speech.
3. Enshrine shared governance structures into law so all campuses are democratically run by all stakeholders, and strongly oppose efforts to dismantle these structures, like [HB 2735](#).

Our continued presence at ABOR meetings has made an impact, as we can see from the UCWAZ demands that have been met this year. We will keep fighting for better wages, job security, protection of student voices, and democratic universities where we are part of the decision-making process.

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## About United Campus Workers of Arizona (UCWAZ)

UCWAZ unites Arizona's diverse public university workforce—including all students, staff, and faculty at NAU, UA & ASU to champion and defend the interests of all university workers. For more information: [www.ucwarizona.org](http://www.ucwarizona.org).

## About Arizona Students' Association

The student-led, non-partisan Arizona Students' Association works to actively empower the student voice, create concrete change, and advocate for student issues by developing student leaders; initiating and executing grassroots campaigns; raising awareness; creating a firm foundation on our stances through proper research; and engaging our government officials at a local, state, and national level. **Contact:** [kyle@azstudents.org](mailto:kyle@azstudents.org)

