

October 12th, 2023

## Open Letter to SFU Administration

### **RE: Black Caucus Concerns about Surveillance and a Call for Safe Picket Lines for TSSU.**

On behalf of the Black Caucus at Simon Fraser University, we would like to express our deepest concerns over the [hiring](#) of Lions Gate Risk Management to survey the picket workers on [TSSU](#) (Teaching Support Staff Union) picket lines.

The TSSU is an independent union representing Teaching Assistants, Tutor Markers, Sessional Instructors, Graduate Facilitators, ELC/ITPS, and Research Assistants - majority of whom are international students and/or racialized individuals. This action creates a risk for all picketers but especially for racialized people, given the known disproportionate impact of surveillance and policing on Black, Indigenous and racialized individuals, including within the SFU community. Beyond the known and documented risk to racialized people, the hyper-visibility of BIPOC individuals makes us particularly vulnerable targets for various nefarious agendas.

Additionally, by surveilling international students, there is a probability that these students' status in Canada could be impacted, thus impacting their ability to live, work, and play at SFU. We strongly urge your administration to respect the privacy of students and workers who are picketing by putting an end to any form of surveillance. We note that the contract with this firm has been withdrawn. However the harm has been done and trust has been undermined. We therefore call upon the university to take the steps necessary to restore this trust including resolving this labour dispute fairly and expeditiously. It is important that the university not only acknowledges the harm that was produced by utilizing surveillance tactics, but also reconciles these harms.

We also stand in solidarity with the letter sent from the Indigenous Studies Department and others who are protesting this deeply harmful practice.

Sincerely,

SFU Black Caucus Steering Committee.

***On behalf of the SFU Black Caucus.***