

Date: November 14<sup>th</sup>, 2018  
To: SFSS Board of Directors & SFPIRG  
RE: SFPIRG Eviction

My name is Mason Meghji, and I am writing to you because of my deep concern for social justice initiatives at SFU, specifically regarding SFPIRG's eviction. I attended SFU for three years from 2009-2012. During this time, I focused on political science and gender studies. During my studies, my instructors encouraged me to focus on critical thinking.

I spent most of my time at SFU in the rotunda, with SFPIRG and Out on Campus. As a transgender Muslim person of colour, I understand what it is like to be a marginalized person and not feel like society understands my lived experience. Evicting SFPIRG and not acknowledging a long-term plan for the incredible amount of hard work and advocacy they have continued to do for decades is complaisant It is when actions like this take place in the world, that marginalized people feel erased and unheard. Not having a long-term for SFPIRG is incredibly cruel and heart-breaking, especially for students who attend SFU, who are marginalized and who want to have their voices heard and be seen in the world.

According to the SFU website, your mission statement is to engage students, engage communities and "equip students with the knowledge, skills and experiences that prepare them for life in an ever-changing and challenging world". Not supporting the ongoing histories of marginalized people that continue to take place would go against SFU's goals. It is incredibly harmful to not show support for an organization that has done continuous advocacy and raised social consciousness. I also read on the SFU website, that SFU is a place of diversity. Your actions have long-term consequences. I leave you with this question - How can SFU be a safe space that supports diversity, when you are not supporting the very spaces that encourage diverse and oppressed communities to have spaces to share, build relationships and organize together?

We live in a culture of white supremacy. Turn on the news, listen to the state of the political climate. What if you had a gay son? A daughter? A transgender loved one? What if you knew someone who was being violently harassed or bullied due to racism, and the people in power around you were legitimizing your behaviors? In this situation, the SFU goals and values are contradictory to the actions you are taking as the Board of Directors at SFSS. I am deeply concerned that by not leasing a permanent space for SFPIRG as well as other social justice groups, that diverse students who experience oppression will be denied access to a safe space where they are able to discuss issues that are important to them.

I urge you to reconsider your position on this matter. If you have any questions or concerns, please feel free to email me at: [zainmalik.meghji@gmail.com](mailto:zainmalik.meghji@gmail.com) or phone me at 778-683-1203. I stand on the side of SFPIRG on this issue and my solidarity lays with the work they have done for the last three decades. I want future generations to feel safe in their educational environments, and it is my duty as a student to make sure they have access to these important spaces.

Sincerely,

Mason Meghji