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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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UUP vows to defend longtime UAlbany researcher, expert witness in Monsanto toxic pollution cases

UUP, the nation's largest higher education union, strongly supports Dr. David Carpenter and will fight to protect his academic freedom and contractual rights.

Today, United University President Frederick E. Kowal issued a statement regarding Dr. David O. Carpenter, a distinguished researcher at the University of Albany who, according to a Feb. 5 news story in the Albany Times Union, is facing a disciplinary investigation by the university stemming from a Freedom of Information Law request by an attorney representing Monsanto Company in toxic pollution cases.

"UUP strongly and unequivocally supports Dr. Carpenter, a highly acclaimed academic at the University at Albany and a highly respected expert on the dangers posed by Monsanto around the country and the world," Kowal said. "His credentials are impeccable and we will not allow him to be silenced."

"We are working closely with Dr. Carpenter to ensure that his academic freedom and contractual rights are preserved and protected. We have stood with Dr. Carpenter from the start and we will support him throughout this matter."

Carpenter, a UUP member who is the founder and director of UAlbany's Institute for Health and the Environment, has testified many times in civil actions involving Monsanto. Those cases are usually brought by plaintiffs claiming that exposure to toxic substances severely impacted their health. Monsanto, a major manufacturer of PCBs before they were banned in the 1970s, has paid out billions in legal settlements and verdicts related to PCBs.

According to the *Times Union*, the FOIL request sought information about Carpenter's research at UAlbany, as well as compensation and benefits the 86-year-old researcher received from testifying in cases related to toxic pollution. Over the past two decades, Carpenter, with approval from UAlbany administration, has sent those funds back to the university for use by his graduate students, staff and research programs.

"United University Professions is a union built on the principles of academic freedom and due process," Kowal said. "We protect our members' rights to engage in important academic inquiry without fear of retribution. We will defend Dr. Carpenter's rights."

UUP is the nation's largest higher education union, with more than 42,000 academic and professional faculty and retirees. UUP members work at 29 New York state-operated campuses, including SUNY's public teaching hospitals and health science centers in Brooklyn, Long Island and Syracuse. It is an affiliate of NYSUT, the American Federation of Teachers, the National Education Association, and the AFL-CIO.

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