

PRESIDENT'S REPORT JULY 2014



721 President Bob Schoonover (right) and members of the Fix L.A. Coalition march on L.A. City Hall to protest predatory deals between big Wall Street banks and the City of L.A. Fix L.A., which includes SEIU 721 and more than 20 area labor, community, and faith-based groups, says these deals have cost the city more than \$300 million.

Instead of Crying 'the Sky is Falling,' SEIU 721 is Focused on Lifting Workers Up

If you listened to the pundits last month, you would be excused for believing that the American Labor movement was dead.

Media outlets across the spectrum, from Fox News to pro-labor blogs like the Daily Kos, predicted that the Supreme Court's ruling in *Harris v. Quinn* would end public sector unions by making it impossible for them to collect dues used to organize and defend workers.

The ruling is certainly bad — and particularly devastating to Illinois homecare workers who've seen their wages double since SEIU helped pass a 2003 law recognizing them as state employees and allowing them to organize — but it is far from the death blow many predicted. In fact, some court watchers say it shows that even this conservative court is unwilling to meddle with longstanding and hard-won protections for public workers.

While the 'Chicken Littles' on the Sunday talk shows and in the press were busy trying to tell us what was going to happen to American workers, more than 1,000 Los Angeles City employees and

their allies were busy hitting the streets. The Fix L.A. Coalition, which includes SEIU 721, other members of the Coalition of City Unions, and more than 20 L.A. community and faith-based organizations, is focused on reversing the city's bad deals with Wall Street banks, using millions in recovered funds to restore city services and bargaining a fair contract with L.A. workers.

Attacks on working people are nothing new. The recent Supreme Court ruling was a response to a lawsuit filed by the National Right to Work Foundation, funded by the anti-union billionaire Koch Brothers and the founders of Walmart. The real lesson here is that, instead of waiting for a bunch of Beltway pundits to tell us what is going to happen to the American Labor movement, we have the power to write our own stories at work, at the bargaining table and, if necessary, in the streets. Instead of worrying about whether the sky is falling, let's focus on lifting workers up.

Gilda Valdez, Chief of Staff



SEIU 721 PRESIDENT'S REPORT

JULY 2014



721 ON THE MOVE

More than 1,000 members of the Fix L.A. Coalition, organized by SEIU 721 and its partners, delivered petitions to L.A. City Hall against big banks and for a good contract.

The recent Supreme Court decision about the union rights of Illinois homecare workers focused national attention on the well-funded legal attacks on public employees, but they're nothing new. At a recent meeting of our International Union, we heard report after report of billionaire-funded efforts to roll back workers' pay, benefits and organizing rights. Leonardo da Vinci once said that the people who change the world don't let things happen to them. Instead, they happen to things. That's why, instead of waiting for bad things to happen, 721 members are getting organized to make things happen.

721 Members Making Things Happen

Instead of letting big two Wall Street banks, Mellon and Dexia, bilk the City of Los Angeles for hundreds of millions in excessive payments for bad interest rate swaps, City of L.A. 721 members built a powerful coalition with other city unions and more than 20 community and faith-based groups. Fix L.A. is pushing the council to recover millions in fees lost to these predatory deals, restore vital services, and bargain a fair contract that protects city workers.

In Ventura, 721 members have joined with police, firefighters, and community groups to fight a pension rollback measure backed by out-of-state "dark money" groups. 721 will launch a unprecedented door-to-door field effort to protect the retirement security of our members and other county employees.

Past Efforts Paying Off for Members

In Riverside County, we're building on big wins at the settlement table with County management. County workers will see additional FLEX benefits and pay increases of up to 8 percent that began kicking in at the end of June. County of L.A. workers will receive a \$250 bonus this month and up to \$133 per month in additional take-home pay next year as a result of their aggressive *Turn It Up!* campaign.

None of this would have happened without the solidarity of our union and the incredible efforts of our members.

Bob Schoonover, President



PRESIDENT'S REPORT JULY 2014: MAKING THINGS HAPPEN FOR SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA WORKERS

MORE THAN 1,000 MARCH ON L.A. CITY HALL TO FIGHT BAD BANK DEALS AND URGE FAIR CONTRACT FOR L.A. CITY WORKERS.



More than a thousand community members, religious leaders, and L.A. city workers delivered over 4,000 hand-collected petitions to L.A. City Hall calling on the Mayor and City Council to recover taxpayer revenue lost as a result of bad interest rate swap deals with Wall Street banks. Fix L.A., a coalition of more than 20 Labor, community and faith-based groups, wants to restore vital city services, protect good middle-class jobs in the public sector and bargain a fair contract for L.A. city workers.

VENTURA COUNTY WORKERS LAUNCH EFFORT TO DEFEAT MISGUIDED PENSION-KILLER INITIATIVE. 721 PLEDGES UNPRECEDENTED FIELD CAMPAIGN.



A coalition of community members and Ventura County labor organizations, including SEIU 721, is preparing to campaign against Ventura County Supervisor Peter Foy's pension-killing ballot measure. SEIU 721 is planning an unprecedented field campaign to defeat the measure, which will appear on the November general election ballot.

Los Angeles Daily News LOS ANGELES CITY COUNCIL URGED TO BETTER CITY'S BANK RATES

July 1, 2014
By Rick Orlov
Prompted by an outcry from city workers, the Los Angeles City Council on Tuesday was urged to try to renegotiate the rate the city is being charged by banks in interest and for foreclosed properties, a total that could amount to \$500 million.

The workers, joined by community leaders, demonstrated in front of the Mellon Bank in downtown Los Angeles before marching to City Hall to voice their demands to restore city services.

"We ask the full City Council and mayor to work with the city and other stakeholders to restore city services," said Bob Schoonover, president of SEIU 721, who led the march. "We want to make Los Angeles a better place to live."

Cheryl Parisi, chair of the Coalition of L.A. City Workers, said the city has lost over the last five years the services of 5,000 workers.

"That means a diminution of the quality of life in our city that is inexcusable and unacceptable."

Councilman Paul Koretz has introduced a proposal to cut the city's budget by 5 percent, but he has not yet announced whether he will support the measure.

Under his plan, the City Administrative Officer would be responsible for determining the status of negotiations and the City Attorney would be responsible for reviewing the proposals.

"By fighting to reform bad bank deals, restore neighborhood services, and support workers in other sectors, SEIU 721 is building valuable coalitions with labor, community, and clergy that will boost our clout at the bargaining table and improve our city."

Linda Dent
Vice President, SEIU 721

Los Angeles Times

Protest of L.A., Wall St. deals

City workers, others want new terms on two bond agreements to reduce costs.

Hundreds of city workers and their allies gathered in front of City Hall on Tuesday to protest against the city's deal with Wall Street banks to pay for the city's debt. The protesters, many wearing yellow shirts with "ACCE" on them, held signs and banners. They were demanding that the city renegotiate the terms of the bond agreements, which they say are unfair and costly. The city's financial agreements with Wall Street banks are a major source of revenue for the city, but they also come with high interest rates and other unfavorable terms. The protesters are calling for a fairer deal that would reduce the city's debt and improve its services.



AT SEIU LOCAL 721 YOU'RE PART OF A WINNING TEAM!



"After an intensive outreach effort involving SEIU 721's member leaders, legislators, legal team and political staff, SEIU Riverside County members won a major settlement that substantially raises members' pay and medical benefits over the next two years. Congratulations to all of the SEIU 721 members who stood together to fight for fairness!"
Bob Schoonover, SEIU 721 President

RIVERSIDE REACHES OUT

The Riverside County 721 Chapter launched an effort to sign up new members and ensure that existing members are taking advantage of valuable union benefits, like free insurance and scholarships.

You're on a winning team

SEIU 721 is working hard to help you and your family. We're offering you a lot of great benefits, like free health insurance, dental, vision, and life insurance. We're also offering you a lot of other benefits, like tuition assistance, job training, and more. We want you to know that you're part of a winning team. We're here to help you succeed.

...make sure you're taking advantage of all the benefits you deserve.

721 MEMBERS RECEIVE A FREE LIFE INSURANCE POLICY worth \$2,000 and an additional \$5,000 accidental death policy. Current members should complete an application to receive their life insurance benefits. Benefits are on file.

721 MEMBERS RECEIVE A HOME DISCOUNT CARD with substantial savings on thousands of local products and services. Members have had access to SEIU 721's exclusive partner, who offers discounts on home repairs, car wash, car detailing, and more. Members also are eligible for the Home Plus, a special discount program exclusively for SEIU 721 members. Home Plus offers discounts on everything from home repairs to home furnishings. Home Plus is a great way to save money on everything you need for your home.

721 MEMBERS HAVE A FREE VOTE. You receive an absentee ballot in the mail. You can vote from the comfort of your home. You can also vote at a public location. SEIU 721 will provide you with a ballot box and a ballot. You can also vote at a public location. SEIU 721 will provide you with a ballot box and a ballot.

RIVERSIDE COUNTY 721 MEMBERS ARE ELIGIBLE FOR TUITION REIMBURSEMENT AND SCHOLARSHIPS. As a SEIU 721 member and Riverside County employee, you are eligible to participate in the SEIU Training Fund which may provide tuition reimbursement up to \$5,000. Your children are also eligible for annual college scholarships of up to \$5,000. For more information, visit www.seiu721.org or contact the Education Support Program at 951-955-0272.