

SEIU 721

PRESIDENT'S

REPORT

SEPTEMBER 2014



721 President Bob Schoonover and Vice President Linda Dent join more than 1,000 union members and minimum wage workers calling for a \$15-an-hour L.A. minimum wage.

JOINING THE FIGHT FOR \$15 IN LA

721 members would fight to increase L.A.'s minimum wage even if it didn't benefit them directly — the gap between the richest Angelenos and average workers is the widest it's ever been. But winning a minimum wage increase for all L.A. workers isn't just the right thing to do — it's good for every member of 721.

Increasing the Minimum Wage Helps 721 Members

In nearly every fight public employees face, our enemies try to play us off against non-union workers in the private sector. Anti-union groups try to stoke jealousy among minimum wage workers about public employees' health benefits and pensions and encourage them to vote for deceptive "pension reform" measures. The best strategy for us to combat these attacks on affordable health care and retirement security for public workers is to help these workers win \$15 dollars an hour and the right to join a union without interference from the boss.

That's why 721 and other SEIU locals are supporting

the Fight For \$15 movement in L.A. and it's why 721 Vice President Linda Dent and I joined thousands of other union members, community leaders and minimum wage workers from fastfood restaurants around Los Angeles in the streets of Downtown L.A. earlier this month.

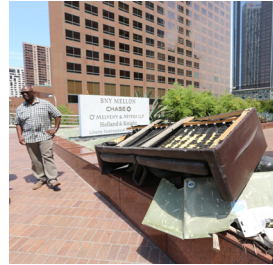
Fight for \$15 Wins 721 Valuable Allies

I've written before about how our Fix L.A. campaign is helping 721 City of L.A. workers build powerful alliances with community and faith leaders around L.A. By fighting for the right of all workers to earn enough to afford basic essentials in the Fight For 15, we're creating the same type of alliances. We're also making it much harder for anti-union groups to scapegoat public workers and drive a wedge between us and non-union private sector workers

Bob Schoonover, President



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In a series of actions, Fix L.A. paid for L.A. kids to swim free at a municipal pool that had recently started charging children to swim, cleaned trash from a long-neglected alley and dumped it at the L.A. offices of New York Mellon Bank, and passed out fake parking tickets to L.A. drivers to let them know recent parking ticket increases were the result of a bad multi-year deal with Mellon and other Wall Street banks. The actions helped win unanimous approval of a city council motion to renegotiate these deals, paving the way for L.A. to recover millions of dollars.

A SERIES OF ACTIONS BY SEIU 721 AND FIX L.A. LED TO A UNANIMOUS VOTE AT THE L.A. CITY COUNCIL TO RENEGOTIATE BAD DEALS WITH BIG WALL STREET BANKS THAT HAVE COST L.A. MILLIONS

Los Angeles Times

L.A. unions, allies issue fake parking tickets to protest bank deals

By Emily Alpert Reyes, Soumya Karlamangla

August 21, 2014, 4:20 PM

Some Los Angeles downtowners returned to their cars Thursday to the unwelcome sight of a white envelope tucked under their windshield wipers. But the faux ticket inside was aimed not at them, but at "Big Banks" for the offenses of "Predatory Bank Deals" and "Gouging L.A. Taxpayers."

In an unconventional attempt to sway public opinion, a group of labor unions and their allies fanned out across the urban center to leave fake tickets on parked cars, arguing that soaring deals with Wall Street banks were at least partly to blame for the rising cost of parking tickets city-wide.

Tickets are "way expensive" — because the city is trying to balance out what these banks are robbing from us," said Odilia Mendez, an organizer with the Alliance of Californians for Community Empowerment.

Parking is a perpetual bugaboo in Angeles. Ticket fees have boomed a decade, hiking the proceeds from nearly \$110



Jose Morales, a member of SEIU 721, places a faux parking ticket on a car parked at a meter on 2nd Street in the Little Tokyo neighborhood of Los Angeles. This was part of an event sponsored by Fix L.A. to spotlight years of hikes in parking fees. (Mel Melcon / Los Angeles Times)

Coalition — which includes labor unions and progressive community groups — has sought to hitch public frustration over parking tickets and other city annoyances to bank deals that they say are charging excessive interest rates.

Such deals "make New York and Wall Street much richer and our city much poorer," said the Rev. Jonal



ON A ROLL, FIGHTING FOR \$15 AND FIXING L.A.



721 TRI-COUNTIES WORKERS LAUNCH ON A ROLL CAMPAIGN TOUTING RECENT WINS

Ventura County 721 members march in the Labor Day parade to bring attention to recent wins improving pay for county workers, strengthening public services by adding additional positions and derailing a deceptive pension measure that would have hurt retirement security for Ventura County public employees.

INLAND AREA JOINS FIGHT FOR \$15



While most of the Fight For \$15 marchers came from around L.A., one of the most fired up contingents came all the way from the 721 chapter in the Inland Area. Their energy in the huge crowd was contagious.

721 ENDORSES KUEHL FOR L.A. SUPERVISOR



Calling her a “trailblazing advocate” for working people, 721 endorsed Sheila Kuehl for the District 3 seat on the Los Angeles Board of Supervisors.

Get all the 721 Endorsements at www.seiu721.org/campaigns

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The Fix L.A. Coalition was back at L.A. City Hall last month to protest how predatory deals between big Wall Street banks and the City of L.A. are preventing the city from providing crossing guards at L.A. schools. Fix L.A. includes SEIU 721 and more than 20 area labor, community and faith-based groups.

Fix L.A. is Changing the Debate About How We Fund Quality Public Services in Los Angeles

In a series of actions over the last month-and-a-half, Fix L.A. has helped change the debate about the Los Angeles City Budget. Faced with revelations about the cost of a series of bad financing deals with big Wall Street banks, it's getting harder for anti-worker conservatives to pin the city's budget challenges on public employees. Instead, 721 and Fix L.A. are showing L.A. taxpayers how Wall Street greed is degrading the services they receive and encouraging them to get active.

On August 6, Fix L.A. focused attention on recreation cuts by paying for kids to swim free at the John C. Argue swimming pool in Exposition Park. The action protested the new \$1 fee that the city charges children to swim in public pools.

Earlier this summer, members of the 721 City of L.A. bargaining team and our Fix L.A. partners collected trash in a city alley that hadn't been cleared in years and dumped the trash at the

downtown offices of the Bank of New York Mellon, one of the big Wall Street banks charging the City of L.A. excessive fees.

On August 21, City of L.A. parking control officers used their lunch hour to put fake parking tickets on the windshields of cars in Downtown L.A. The fake tickets informed drivers that recent increases in parking fees might have been avoided if the city hadn't been locked into a bad multi-year deal with New York Mellon.

The point of these and other actions is to remind voters in L.A. that the city could easily afford quality services and a fair contract for city workers if it would end these bad bank deals.

Gilda Valdez, Chief of Staff

Gilda Valdez

