

2016-2017

# PRESIDENT'S ANNUAL REPORT

TO THE MEMBERS OF SEIU 721



## WE RISE AND RESIST



**A MESSAGE FROM SEIU 721  
PRESIDENT BOB SCHOONOVER**

**A** little more than a year ago, Donald Trump's surprise victory shocked our nation.

We knew it would be a rough road, beginning with his appointment of a cabinet of billionaire amateurs and a Supreme Court Justice with a history of anti-worker rulings. But what's most disturbing is how the President's own language has empowered racist, anti-immigrant, anti-women and anti-worker/Right to Work elements in our own society.

That's why I am so proud of our members and our union. In the face of these attacks, we launched Rise and Resist to recruit, train and activate member leaders to expose Right to Work. As a result, we've fought back all over Southern California and won.

SEIU 721 members joined a national coalition to save the Affordable Care Act that generated hundreds of thousands of calls and emails into Congress and visited Congressmen in their districts and at home. We beat four separate repeal attempts, saving affordable care for more than 30 million Americans.

We won good contracts in Ventura County, L.A.

County Sanitation Districts, the City of Riverside and other cities all over Southern California. We helped ResCare workers organize and join our union. SEIU 721 COPE elected strong worker advocates to Congress and to city government in Compton and Riverside, and SEIU 721 members lobbied Sacramento and rescued millions for vital safety net services.

To be sure, we've still got some tough battles on our hands. Riverside County workers, fed up with more than a year of management stonewalling and bad-faith bargaining, launched a historic two-day strike that brought all three leading candidates for Governor to the line. The strike brought an immediate counter attack by national Right to Work groups.

But read on: our union is strong. Together, we will rise and resist, and we will win.

*Bob Schoonover*



# SEIU 721 LED THE FIGHT TO RISE

THE PHONY RIGHT TO WORK MOVEMENT ATTACKED WORKERS NATIONWIDE, BUT SEIU 721 MEMBERS' STRENGTH AND

**NOVEMBER  
2016**

SEIU 721-led coalition defeats deceptive Charter Amendment RRR. Backed by big business interests, RRR was a power grab aimed at gutting civil service protections at the L.A. Department of Water and Power and paving the way for contracting out.



**DECEMBER  
2016**

Workers at St. John's Well Child & Family Center win a three-year deal that will provide a wage increase for all workers, an employer match for 403(b) retirement eligible contributions, new hours of work, investments in continuing education, and a new holiday.



**FEBRUARY  
2017**

Landmark statewide organizing campaign by SEIU Locals 721 and 1021 will bring more than 560 ResCare employees into SEIU, with more than 300 workers set to join SEIU 721.



**MARCH  
2017**

Employees at the L.A. County Law Library win an agency shop agreement that will increase their power in the workplace and counter the short-staffing and contracting out that threaten high-quality service for attorneys and law enforcement professionals.

After months of hard-fought negotiations, SEIU 721 members at Northeast Valley Health Corporation win a strong 3-year deal with an 11.5% raise. The contract ensures NEVHC will continue to provide quality low-cost care to area families and seniors.



Hundreds of SEIU 721 members, concerned patients and community members held vigils at the homes of two California congressmen on February 23rd to protest their refusal to hold town hall meetings on plans to repeal the Affordable Care Act.

L.A. County Nurse Practitioners stage a series of successful workplace actions and a petition drive to the Board of Supervisors highlighting their importance to the delivery of quality healthcare.



Ventura County 721 members win new three-year contract that increases standards, provides a 4.5 percent wage increase, \$3,900 in flex credit contributions and new life and accident insurance.



L.A. County Sanitation workers kick off contract campaign focused on helping members offset the rising cost of retirement.



After a year-and-a-half effort, Olive View RNs win 12-hour shifts as part of their ongoing campaign to create a just workplace and establish L.A. County as the healthcare employer and provider of choice.



Sheriff's Department employees held a solidarity action outside of the Twin Towers Correctional Facility to call attention to bullying taking place in our jail system.



Riverside County SEIU Local 721 and community advocates gathered on the steps of the Riverside County Board of Supervisors for a press conference to condemn more than \$119 million wasted by county management.

SEIU 721 members won major victories in 2016-2017, raising standards, improving working conditions, and protecting workers by winning new contracts in the City of Riverside, L.A. County Sanitation Districts, Ventura County, Northeast Valley Health Corporation and many other SoCal cities. SEIU 721 helped transform health care delivery in the L.A. County Health Agency with its "Safe and Just Culture" plan. Our union took a leading role in the successful campaign to stop the rollback of the Affordable Care Act, and we launched "Rise and Resist" to take on the anti-worker billionaires behind the "Right to Work" attack on public workers.



# RISE AND RESIST IN 2016-2017

OUR UNITY SCORED MAJOR VICTORIES IN THE WORKPLACE, AT THE BARGAINING TABLE, AND AT THE BALLOT BOX!

**MAY  
2017**

Riverside County SEIU 721 members vote by a 98% margin to escalate their Raising Up Riverside campaign – up to and including a possible strike. The vote comes in response to 10 months of bad faith behavior by county management.



**JUNE  
2017**

City of Oxnard employees use the bargaining process to win a pay increase, holidays and permanent status for workers held in temp positions for up to 15 years.



SEIU members, patients, consumers and activists generate 270,000 phone calls and more than 400 town halls, congressional visits and other actions to defeat the Trump Administration's efforts to repeal the Affordable Care Act.



**SEPTEMBER  
2017**

Fed-up Riverside County workers stage a historic two-day unfair labor practice strike that wins the support of the top-three candidates for Governor – State Treasurer John Chiang, Lt. Governor Gavin Newsom and former L.A. Mayor Antonio Villaraigosa.



**OCTOBER  
2017**

Working with a national coalition of labor partners, community organizations and health advocates, SEIU 721 helps defeat the Trump-backed Graham-Cassidy bill, the fourth straight effort to repeal Obamacare and gut Medicaid spending.



**SEIU 721  
VOTA!**

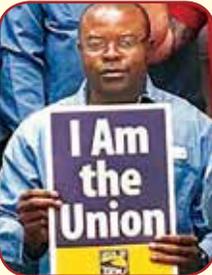


SEIU 721 COPE helps elect Jimmy Gomez to Congress, Aja Brown and Tana McCoy to the Compton City Council and Andy Melendez and Jim Perry to the Riverside City Council.

Hundreds of SEIU 721 members take an oath to become Rise & Resist Leaders and train to fight the anti-worker "right to work" movement at an inaugural Unity Summit in South Los Angeles.



City of Simi Valley members win a strong two-year contract approved at the September 25th City Council meeting that includes improvements in deferred compensation and a new bereavement benefit.



L.A. County Sanitation workers win a new 5-year contract with pay increase, wellness and uniform allowances, binding arbitration and other improvements.

Conejo Recreation and Park District (CRPD) workers win a strong two-year contract that includes a 5% pay increase.

Members and stewards of SEIU 721 BU 729 win two major grievances at LAC+USC: The first, upholds workers' right to use comp and vacation time to cover illness and injury; the second, forces more transparency in performance evaluations.



SEIU 721 partnered with L.A. County to host the third county-wide Health Agency Town Hall to discuss the future of health, the direction of the Health Agency, and launch a "safe and just culture" campaign.

Thousand Oaks members win a 2-year deal with a 5.5 percent raise.

After a months' long campaign by SEIU 721 members, residents and community groups, the Oxnard City Council votes July 25 to make Oxnard a Sanctuary City.

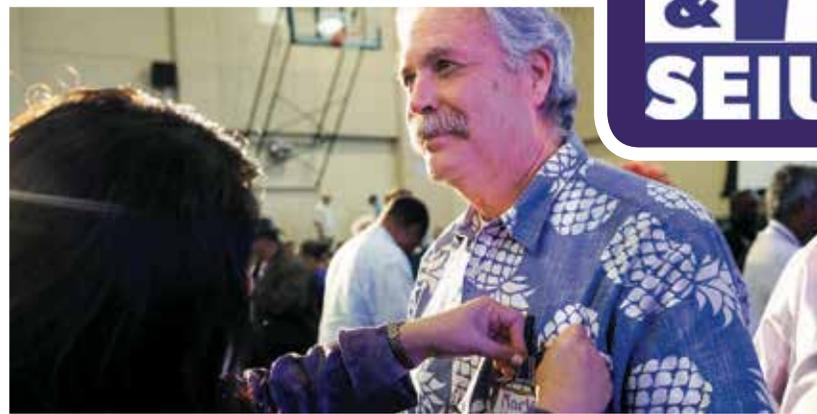
SEIU 721 members, a coalition of unions and L.A. County Health Agency managers interested in changing workplace culture in public health organize the "Just Culture for All" town hall at the Health Agency in L.A.



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## MORE THAN 1,000 SEIU LEADERS PLEDGE



As part of a coordinated strategy to fight the anti-worker “Right to Work” movement, more than 1,000 SEIU 721 members took an oath to become Rise & Resist Leaders at Unity Summits and training sessions during 2017. “Our union is facing a serious threat — the threat of being torn apart,” Bob Schoonover, President of SEIU Local 721, told attendees at SEIU 721’s July 22nd Unity Summit at St. Sophia Cathedral in South Los Angeles. “The forces of greed want to divide our union and weaken our power, from the bargaining table at home all the way to Washington, D.C. We are here

today because every single one of us has way too much to lose to let that happen!” Members who attended the Unity Summits got a crash course about the right-to-work attack — and how the wealthy, anti-union forces funding it want to fool workers into giving up their collective bargaining power. For union members, “right to work” laws translate to the right-to-work without a contract for lower pay. At a second Unity Summit held in August in Downtown L.A., SEIU 721

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## TO RISE AND RESIST "RIGHT TO WORK"

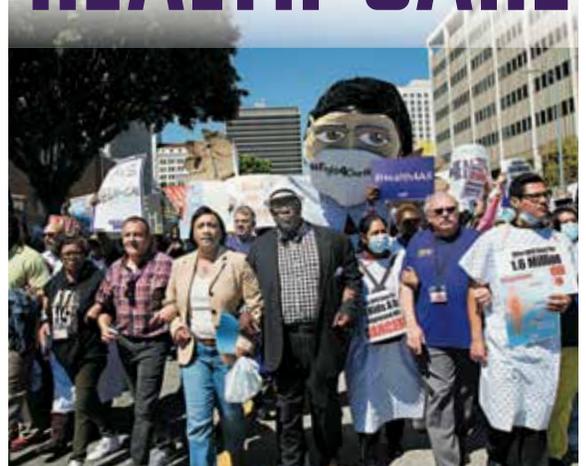


hosted Wisconsin public workers who have suffered under right to work in their state.

In 2011, Wisconsin Governor Scott Walker signed the infamous "Act 10", making Wisconsin a right-to-work state and decimating Wisconsin's once-proud public sector union membership by 70-80%. "That's why it's so important for all of us to be full, dues-paying members," Schoonover emphasized. "Politicians need to respect our power or they will take the easy way out."

Both summits featured background sessions on the small group of anti-worker billionaires funding the phony Right to Work scheme, how Right to Work laws are designed to hurt public employees and how full union membership can protect workers' rights. Members held break-out sessions where they swapped stories on how union membership has personally made a difference for them — and many reported afterward that sharing these experiences reinvigorated their commitment to our union.

## SAVING AFFORDABLE HEALTH CARE



### 721 MEMBERS AND NATIONAL COALITION SAVE THE AFFORDABLE CARE ACT



**"SEIU 721 members should be incredibly proud they helped lead the coalition that saved the Affordable Care Act — not once, not twice, but four times this year. Their street actions, lobbying and calls will save millions of lives." — Linda Dent, Vice President SEIU 721**

SEIU 721 members played a key role in the national effort to defeat four separate attempts to roll-back the Affordable Care Act — a victory health care experts say will protect health care access for as many as 32 million Americans. Partnering with a national coalition of labor unions, community organizations and health advocates, SEIU 721 in August helped defeat the Trump-backed Graham-Cassidy bill, the fourth and final effort in this session of Congress to repeal Obamacare and gut Medicaid spending.

Since 2016, our union has taken part in coalition actions that have

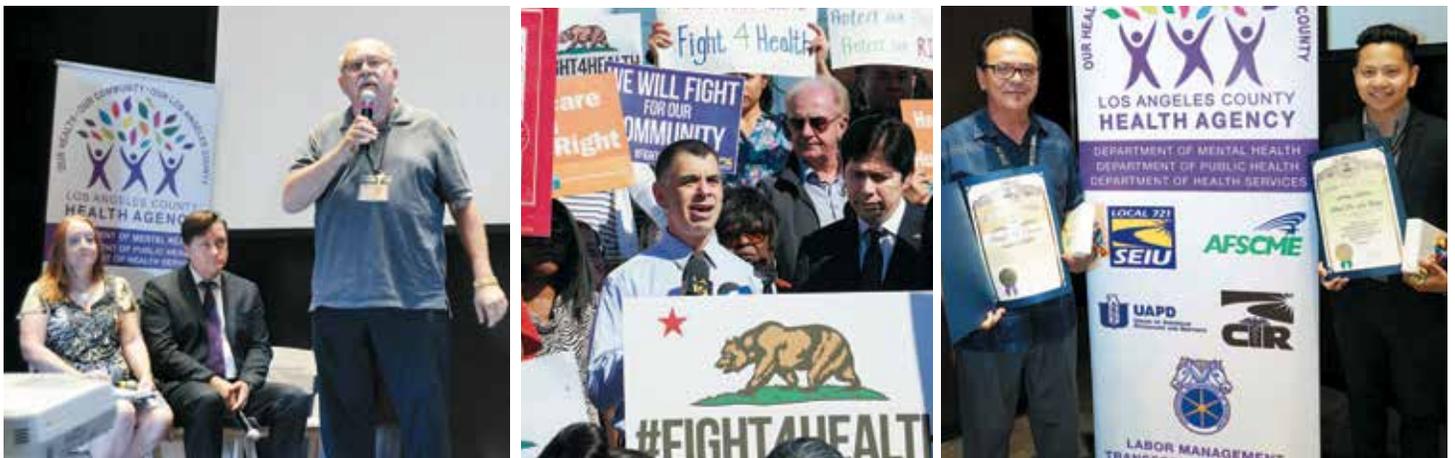
generated hundreds of street actions, congressional office visits and Capitol protests. Since we started, weekly phone banks have generated more than 270,000 calls into Congress. By defeating the Graham-Cassidy bill in the U.S. Senate, we helped save Medi-Cal/Medicaid funding, the Affordable Care Act and preserved access to healthcare for 32 million Americans, including those with pre-existing conditions. The public and politicians won't soon forget that this victory belongs to SEIU 721 and this powerful coalition for affordable care!

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## TRANSFORMING HEALTH CARE DELIVERY



## SEIU 721 LEADS EFFORT TO CREATE A "SAFE AND JUST CULTURE" IN HEALTH CARE



SEIU 721 members, working with other unions and managers at the merged L.A. Health Agency, have transformed the county health care delivery system by increasing worker involvement in decision making. A major change: Adoption of a Just Culture program to empower every employee.

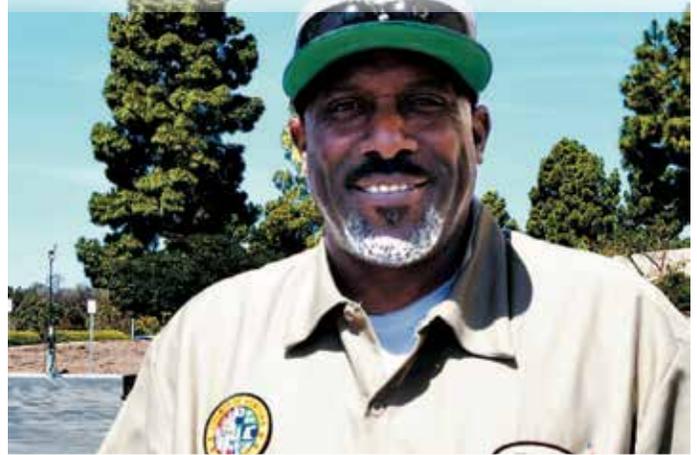
"Just Culture means 'Be Kind, Be Fair.' No blame games. We should not fear coming to work and doing our jobs. No more blaming individuals for systemic errors," said Alina Mendizabal, SEIU 721

Executive Board member and L.A. County Community Health Plan Marketing Representative.

During our union's campaigns to end workplace bullying and increase transparency and worker involvement in public health, Dr. Mitch Katz, Director of the LA County Health Agency, emerged as a major ally. SEIU 721 salutes Dr. Katz, who is moving to New York to take care of his aging parents. Dr. Katz, you will be missed!

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## FIGHTING FOR EVERY WORKER



### REPRESENTATIONAL WINS DEMONSTRATE THE POWER OF UNION MEMBERSHIP



Probably the best demonstration of the value of full union membership and the power of our collective voice is our union's ability to help workers enforce contracts and resolve workplace problems with discipline, favoritism, bullying and a host of other grievances.

Last year, our union handled more than 2,000 individual and group grievances. Here are just a few examples that demonstrate how a united, organized and involved membership can make a difference:

- In April, Olive View nurses won 12-hour shifts as part of a campaign to create a safe and just workplace. Nurses organized and used their labor-management partnership to win reform of 16-hour shifts that degrade health care quality.

- Also in April, SEIU 721 Ventura County member Kenneth Milton won 244 hours of back pay after reaching out to our union for help, after a temporary assignment filling in for an injured co-worker stretched for months.
- In May, City of Oxnard workers used the bargaining process to win pay increases, holidays and permanent status for workers held in temp positions for up to 15 years.
- August Members and stewards of SEIU 721 BU 729 won two major grievances at LAC+USC: The first, upheld workers' right to use comp and vacation time to cover illness and injury; the second, forced more transparency in performance evaluations.

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Northeast Valley Health Corporation workers



City of Riverside

## WE LIFTED UP COMMUNITIES BY BARGAINING STRONG CONTRACTS



L.A. County Sanitation workers



St. John's Well Child & Family Center workers

SEIU 721 members across Southern California won good new contracts, using bargaining to raise standards, improve working conditions and protect workers.

- After months of hard-fought negotiations, SEIU 721 members at Northeast Valley Health Corporation won a strong 3-year deal with an 11.5% raise. The contract ensures NEVHC will continue low-cost care to area families.
- SEIU 721 Ventura County 721 members won a new three-year contract that increases standards, provides a 4.5% wage increase, \$3,900 in flex credit contributions and new life and accident insurance.
- SEIU 721 workers at St. John's Well Child & Family Center won a three-year deal that will provide a wage increase for all workers, an employer match for 403(b) retirement eligible contributions, new hours of work, investments in continuing education, and a new holiday.
- SEIU 721 L.A. County Sanitation workers won a new 5-year contract with a pay increase, wellness and uniform allowances and binding arbitration.
- SEIU 721 Thousand Oaks members won a 2-year deal with a 5.5% raise.
- SEIU 721 Conejo Recreation and Park District (CRPD) workers won a new two-year contract that includes a 5% pay increase.
- SEIU 721 City of Riverside workers won a strong 3-year contract with raises of between 8% and 15%.
- SEIU 721 City of Simi Valley members won a two-year contract with improvements in deferred compensation and a new bereavement benefit.

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By knocking on doors, making calls, and pulling voters to the polls for our endorsed candidates, SEIU 721 COPE helped elect Jimmy Gomez to Congress, Aja Brown and Tana McCoy to the Compton City Council and Andy Melendez and Jim Perry to the Riverside City Council.

SEIU 721 members value our communities the communities too much to sit out vital elections, so we worked hard to get out the vote for candidates who stand with workers and our families.

We have elected women and men who will fight for working households like ours. We work hard, and we live up to our values. We are proud to support leaders who do the same.



## SEIU 721 VICTORY! Endorsed & Elected:



Jimmy Gomez



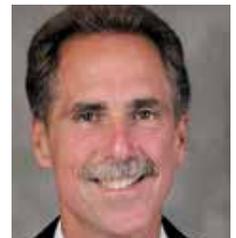
Aja Brown



Tana McCoy



Andy Melendez



Jim Perry

## SEIU 721 COPE HELPED ELECT CANDIDATES WHO FIGHT FOR WORKING FAMILIES

## SEIU LOBBYING IN SACRAMENTO DELIVERED MILLIONS FOR VITAL SERVICES

By electing legislators who understand our work and educating them about threats to vital public services, we are able to win resources to avert layoffs, increase hiring of frontline workers and address short-staffing and caseload problems. Here are some key victories from the 2017 legislative session:

### FUNDING FOR FOSTER CARE PUBLIC HEALTH NURSES

Victory Outcome: \$3.84 million in general fund support, \$15.4 million total funds with 75% in federal matching dollars. Additional funding will result in hiring more PHNs to ensure foster children receive appropriate health and mental health care.

### FUNDING FOR MEDI-CAL ELIGIBILITY WORKERS

Victory Outcome: \$240 million for Medi-Cal administration. This will allow frontline eligibility workers to continue providing much needed services.

### FUNDING FOR CALWORKS SINGLE ALLOCATION

Victory Outcome: We successfully lobbied the administration to restore more than \$100 million in proposed cuts to the CalWORKs Single Allocation, which has been chronically underfunded since the recession.



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One year ago, in April 2016, SEIU's CSW leaders came together to take a stand against the criminalization of social work. We challenged our DCFS and elected County leaders to reject the scapegoating of social workers and, instead, institute common sense systemic reforms that get to the heart of child protection problems. CSW's developed a three point "Roadmap" — a prescription for making children safer in L.A. County. Since then, we have:

- Created a mentorship program so that, starting with the next academy class, all CSWs will be assigned a mentor to help master the skills they'll need to keep children safe.
- Boosted recruitment of more loving homes and quality placement opportunities and pushed to raise standards to reduce placement rejections.
- Secured 220 new CSWs in the 2017 county budget to reduce caseloads.



## CHILDREN'S SOCIAL WORKERS PUSHED FOR AND WON CHILD SAFETY REFORMS

## A MAJOR NEW SEIU 721 BENEFIT: LEGAL SERVICES FOR ALL MEMBERS

SEIU 721 soon will offer a valuable new benefit to full members: Free legal services for all who sign up for a voluntary member-paid insurance program through U.S. Legal Services.

The Union's legal services benefit will allow SEIU 721 members and their families access to network attorneys for civil and criminal issues, including criminal defense for union members. Attorneys will be available by phone for emergency situations after hours.

Legal services are 100% paid with no copay or deductible other than court costs. Legal services include civil lawsuits, estate planning (living trust), review of contracts and documents, immigration, real estate transactions, elder law, landlord/tenant issues, and other legal matters.

The legal services benefit plan is expected to be effective March 1, 2018. More information will be available soon at [www.seiu721.org](http://www.seiu721.org).





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# SEIU 721



# IN 2017

PRESIDENT'S YEAR-END REPORT TO THE MEMBERS OF SEIU 721

## SEIU 721 IS READY TO FIGHT THE PHONY "RIGHT TO WORK"

### RIGHT TO WORK GROUPS ALREADY ARE COMING AFTER SEIU 721 MEMBERS

The deceptively named "Right to Work" movement is the biggest threat to public workers in America today. Funded by a network of interlocking foundations funded by a small group of ultra-right wing billionaires, the Right to Work scheme seeks huge tax roll backs for the very rich by radically reducing government services and laying off government workers and lower labor costs by eliminating the right to organize unions in the private sector.

SEIU 721 created Rise and Resist, a comprehensive program to recruit, train and empower a new generation of leaders in our union, to fight back against Right to Work. Members who attended our summer summit immediately understood the need to protect working people against such a well-financed attack because many of them are starting to experience it firsthand.

Take a look at our union's fight in Riverside County. Management has stonewalled county workers for a year, even surveilling and harassing nurses fighting to improve patients and employees against weapons smuggled into county emergency rooms. Just two days into Riverside County workers' historic strike, Capital

Research Center took to social media, attacking SEIU 721 nurses for jeopardizing patient care. Capital Research Center is one of several Right to Work think tanks funded through an elaborate network of shell foundations by ultra-conservative billionaires, like the Koch Brothers and the Scaife family.

Weeks later, SEIU 721 members at the L.A. County Department of Public and Social Services reported that operatives from the Freedom Foundation had accessed their personal information and were trying to convince them to drop their union membership. Who is the Freedom Foundation? You guessed it — another Right to Work think tank bankrolled by the foundations of ultra-conservative billionaires.

The Right to Work attack isn't a conspiracy theory — it's here. But these anti-worker groups aren't fooling anybody. And our union is ready with a powerful strategy to stop their plan to cut vital services and fire public workers.

Gilda Valdez, Chief of Staff



*Gilda Valdez*



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