

Charter Change RRR Hurts LA City Workers & Residents – Vote No!

In a brazen attack on public employees in the second largest City in the country, Charter Amendment RRR – appearing on the November 8 citywide Los Angeles ballot -- initiates the dismantling of historic, century-old civil service protections, starting with 10,000 employees in the Dept. of Water and Power, roughly one-fourth of the City workforce. From there, it is a slippery slope to destroying civil service in all other City departments.

Since this DWP “reform” was first proposed in City Council six months ago as part of a larger DWP restructuring plan, Council 36 – which represents six LA City Locals – has been fighting back with our partners in the Coalition of LA City Unions and Fix LA community-based allies. In the last several weeks, we have ratcheted up the fight

with a sophisticated new messaging campaign designed to educate the public and union members about the numerous dangers of Charter Amendment RRR, and to encourage voters to reject this misleading measure.

Council 36, together with our partners in the six-member Coalition of LA City Unions and a growing “Who’s Who” list of political allies, community groups and faith leaders, including **Laura Chick (former LA City Controller)**, **Erwin Chemerinsky (former City Charter Reform Commission Chair, leading Constitutional Law scholar and frequent LA Times contributor)**, **Pastor William D. Smart (Fix LA Coalition)**, and others are working with our top-notch campaign strategists to defeat this measure.

DWP is one of the largest municipally owned utilities, serving approximate-



ly 700,000 water customers and 1.4 million electric customers. **The importance of beating Charter Amendment RRR for civil service workers not only in LA but across the country cannot be overstated.**

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AFSCME Backs LA County Supervisor Candidates Hahn, Barger in Historic Opportunity

The LA County Board of Supervisors races in Districts 4 and 5 will be decisive for nearly 10,000 Council 36 members in our ten LA County Locals



and AFSCME, together with the **LA County Federation of Labor, AFL-CIO**, have been kicking into top gear to ensure victory in this final stretch before Election Day on Nov. 8.

These races present an unprecedented opportunity to elect both **US Representative Janice Hahn** (left) and **Katherine Barger** (right), the current Chief of Staff to terming-out **Supervisor Mike Antonovich**, to a unanimous, five-member labor supermajority.

All five Supervisors additionally sit on the **Board of the Metropolitan Transportation Authority**, which employs the **MTA Supervisors in AFSCME Local 3634**.

AFSCME Rejects New Salary “Concept” for Court Employees

Local 575 Vice President **Mark Natoli**, a 30-year veteran employee of LA County’s Superior Court system, took to the podium at a public hearing on August 29 in Los Angeles, to decry a newly proposed “concept” being proposed by some court commissioners.

Concept #9, as it is known, would standardize the salaries of many court classifications – regardless of dramatic regional variations in costs of living in California and other key considerations.

Years of devastating budget cuts to the judicial branch and superior courts statewide – to the tune of \$1 billion since the great recession – are causing delayed access to justice for tens of thousands of residents each year. AFSCME leaders, including Natoli, have been assiduously lobbying for the state’s restoration of funding ever since, with some success.

But this concept, Natoli made clear at the recent hearing, is no answer to judicial budget shortfalls.

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Cerritos Back in Battle for Fair Treatment

Cerritos City employees are back in battle for a fair contract against management negotiators who have a history using bad-faith bargaining tactics. Management also has refused to improve their Last, Best and Final offer in any discernible way in recent third party mediation efforts.

In June, **Local 619** members voted to reject the City's Last Best and Final Offer, which had included wage freezes and the denial of protections for a small number of full-time employees – those working in the **Cerritos Center for the Performing Arts** – that most others already enjoy.

The workers are ratcheting up political pressure and in the process of launching a community-based outreach campaign in hopes of winning public support and convincing City Council members to intervene.

If this feels like *deja vu*, that's because in 2011, management bargained in bad faith and then unilaterally imposed contract terms on these workers –



propelling them into an epic struggle for fair treatment. That battle inspired an **AFSCME-sponsored state law (AB-646)** that created new fact-finding recourse for public employees in labor disputes.

At City Council meetings over recent weeks, Local 619 **President Nick Brown** and others relayed stories of co-workers' personal hardship due to inequitable wages and job insecurity in the performing arts center classifications.

AFSCME staff representatives **Gary**

Guthman and Adam Acosta also noted the City's failure once again to bargain in good faith under California labor laws.

They have been joined in solidarity by other Council 36 leaders at these meetings, including **LA City Local 3090 President Alice Goff**, **West Hollywood City Local 3339 (WE-HOME) leader-Donn Uyeno**, **Orange County Local 2076 President Raymond Hartwell** and **Hawaiian Gardens Local 3624 activist, Linda Sugina**.

Charter Change “RRR” Hurts LA City Workers & Residents – Vote No in November!

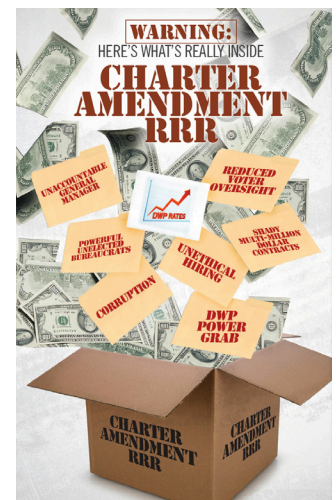
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For this reason, the **“Resolution to Condemn the Attacks on Civil Service,”** unanimously adopted at the AFSCME International Convention in Las Vegas in July, commits AFSCME to “lend its full support to opposing and defeating” this measure.

This is just the latest political swipe at

public employee rights, but it is happening in one of the most progressive communities in the country.

Tea Party **Governor Scott Walker** in Wisconsin and others have already been subverting civil service protections across the country, through similar, misleading government “reforms.”



AFSCME Rejects New Salary “Concept” for Court Employees

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Speaking on behalf of **LA County Superior Court clerks and paralegals**, Natoli rejected the “uniform classification” concept as an unfair and impracticable means to reduce employee salaries to what would presumably be a “lower common denominator.” He warned that standardizing pay and benefits would violate locally bargained contracts.

Since the great recession, we've witnessed in Los Angeles three separate

rounds of layoffs and furloughs and finally received our first raise in seven years,” Natoli said. “Now, to suggest after all that has happened and the money wasted on (failed) technology projects and the like, that we are the reason people are being denied access to justice – that takes a lot of nerve.”

Natoli was joined by members of **SEIU Local 721 and presiding judges from both large and small counties**

who spoke forcefully of the adverse impacts that this concept would have, both on the public and court employees.

A panel of judges serving on the **Commission on the Future of California's Court System** thanked the speakers and promised to take the remarks under their advisement as the concept consideration process continues.