

Supporting Strong Public Sector Unions Post a *Janus v. AFSCME* Supreme Court Decision

WHEREAS, All families should have the means to thrive in safe and healthy communities; and

WHEREAS, The working people who make the County of Alameda run deserve good jobs that can support families; and

WHEREAS, Over the last forty years, working people have become more productive than ever, yet real wages have declined and CEOs make more than ever before; i.e., 347 times more than the average person in 2016; and

WHEREAS, Being able to come together in unions gives people - particularly women and people of color - a powerful voice in speaking up for themselves, their families, and their communities and ensures they are treated with dignity and respect at work; and

WHEREAS, When people stick together in unions, they gain the power in numbers to raise wages and improve benefits like health care for themselves, their families, and all of our communities; and

WHEREAS, People working collectively together in unions have won victories like the 40-hour work week, overtime pay, and health and safety standards, as well as advanced policies especially important to women like paid leave, earned sick time, and reducing the gender pay gap; and

WHEREAS, When people can negotiate together for strong contracts, higher wages, and safer, dignified working conditions, all of us benefit, our communities are stronger, and our entire economy is made more fair; and

WHEREAS, The United States Supreme Court is considering the case *Janus v. AFSCME Council 31*, which could restrict unions from requiring dues from non-member employees who benefit from collective bargaining, thereby weakening the unions' power to effectively negotiate on behalf of all public sector workers - such as nurses, teachers, and firefighters; and

WHEREAS, An unfavorable decision by the United States Supreme Court may deny public sector workers the freedom to access strong unions that make our communities safe, more equitable, and strong; and

WHEREAS, In states where public union rights have come under attack, we have seen different outcomes - in Wisconsin, for example, union membership has fallen 38% after the state passed a law curtailing collective bargaining in 2011, but in other states such as Ohio and New Hampshire, unions have been able to survive similar attacks through proactive strategies; and

WHEREAS, Alameda County relies on those who work in public service to provide health care, educate our children, put out fires, fix our potholes, drive our buses, pick up our trash, and more.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, That this County of Alameda Board of Supervisors, State of California, supports the freedom of all employees to exercise their rights to a voice and dignity on the job through joining together in strong unions; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That the County of Alameda Board of Supervisors urges the County Administrator and the County's Human Resource Services to work with the public sector unions in Alameda County to ensure their health and success post a *Janus v. AFSCME* Supreme Court case decision by cooperating to mitigate impacts and by engaging in good faith discussions around implementing a membership card providing ongoing financial commitments of unit members and adequate release time for rank and file union leaders to explain the implications of a negative *Janus* decision and to encourage continued union membership to their county employee colleagues.