

## Know Your Weingarten Rights

By Victor Rodriguez  
Executive Board Member-at-Large

Your Weingarten Rights are both important to you and very much worth understanding. *They assure you of union representation during any investigative meeting with management.* Since there have been some recent problems concerning these rights, I want to remind you all about them.

In the past, some ATU Local 1277 brothers and sisters unknowingly have forfeited their absolute right to have a union representative with them during a confrontational meeting with management. For example, some supervisors may approach our members and begin a casual conversation. During this “friendly” chat, the supervisor might ask you questions about a whole range of things, including job performance, safety rules, attendance, attitude, insubordination, drinking, drug use, falsification of records, theft, or sabotage.

*You should also remember that your Weingarten Rights cover telephone calls and/or interviews with management.*

Some supervisors feel that they can intimidate you because of their position or intimidate you by continuing to ask you questions. You may feel compelled to answer, to defend yourself, and perhaps become augmentative. A word to the wise: *Don't ever think such potentially entrapping conversations can't take place! They can. And do.*

**If you have the slightest feeling that this conversation could lead to discipline, you can demand a union rep. Demanding a union rep completes the situation, ends the conversation/interview right then and there. Simply put, disciplinary interviews need union representation, conversations that do not lead to discipline do not need it.**

*As an employee, you must make it clear that you are requesting union representation.* This request must come before or during the conversation/interview. You can ask for a union Shop Steward, and you should point out that you have every right to the presence of a Shop Steward at this point. Further, be sure to state that you will *not* answer any questions until you have either a Shop Steward present or union representative.

### A Possible Unfair Labor Practice

If you are denied the right to any kind of union representation, and the interview continues, be sure to state that continued conversation may well be classified as an unfair labor practice. *Your employer may not discipline you for refusing to answer.* However, you may *not* choose to have another union member at your jobsite to represent you. You *must* be represented by either your Shop Steward or a Local 1277 rep.

Be sure to contact your Shop Steward if you are uncertain about a line of questioning that could lead to disciplinary action. Your Shop Steward is your first line of defense; he or she has experience in handling these situations. Your Shop Steward has the right to question the subject matter of a conversation as it pertains to you.

He or she has the right to meet with you in private and discuss your situation. Your Shop Steward should be present during all meetings/incidents—from verbal warnings all the way to termination—and during *any and all* discussions with management pertaining to discipline. If you give up your rights to management at any point, it could cost you your job in the long run.

### Invoking Your Weingarten Rights

When you feel the need to claim your Weingarten Rights, it will help you to have a copy of the following words on you at all times while you work. You can produce this passage and read it to your supervisor.

*An Employee has the legal right to say, if this discussion could in any way lead to being disciplined or terminated, or cause and affect my working conditions: “I respectfully request that my union representative be present at this meeting. Without representation present, I choose not to participate.”*

It would also be a good idea to have with you the business card of one of Local 1277's Executive Board officers.

Your Weingarten Rights are a very important and hard-fought benefit that you have. Hopefully, you may never need to invoke them, but please be sure to understand them and how to exercise them if you have to do so.

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Here are the upcoming Local 1277 membership meetings for February & March. Please make every attempt to attend the meeting for your unit. It's your Union, and we need your participation at our meetings! All members will receive credit for the meetings.

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| Tuesday, Feb. 6:   | Los Angeles area members:   |
| Tuesday, Mar. 5:   | L.A. Building Trades Council, 1626 Beverly Blvd., Los Angeles. Morning Session 10:00 a.m. Evening Session 5:00 p.m.                                   |
| Wednesday, Feb. 7: | Metrolink Unit members:   |
| Wednesday, Mar. 6: | Local 1277 Office, 1744 North Main Street. Morning Session 8:30 a.m. Evening Session 5:00 p.m.  |
| Wednesday, Feb. 7: | Riverside area members:   |
| Wednesday, Mar. 6: | IELC Building, 1074 E. La Cadena Dr., Riverside Morning Session 10:00 a.m. Afternoon Session 3:00 p.m.  |
| Thursday, Feb. 8:  | SunLine area members:   |
| Thursday, Mar. 7:  | IBEW Local 40 Electrical Resource Center 39615 Washington Street - Suite G Palm Desert, CA 92211 Morning Session 10:00a.m. Afternoon Session 4:00p.m. |
| Thursday, Feb. 8:  | Long Beach area members:  |
| Thursday, Mar. 7:  | LBFA Local 372, 2201 Cherry Avenue, Signal Hill CA 90755 Morning: 10:00 a.m. Afternoon: 3:00 p.m. Evening: 6:00 p.m.                                  |



## President's report

This is the *big one!*

### Our Country, Our Democracy, Faces a Turning Point

By Jeff Shaffer  
President, Local 1277

Sure, I know: At every election cycle—local, state, or federal—your Executive Board again and again reminds you about how important a particular election is. For you, your careers, your families, and your future.

But *this* year, brothers and sisters, the upcoming state and federal elections *really* are the most important ones of our lifetimes. This is the big one. The political Super Bowl of our lives. The stakes are enormous: Who will control the congress that crafts the legislation that so greatly affects our lives, worksites, families, and future? Who will appoint federal judges whose views and decisions impact our lives? Who will appoint the commissioners to those federal agencies whose rules, regulations, and policies are so important to us?

But this year's Presidential race is even bigger than that. Much bigger: *The stakes are nothing less than the survival of our democracy, the survival of the country as we have known it all our lives. Don't kid yourselves, brothers and sisters, the future of the United States itself is at stake in November, and because of that so is the future of our lives, careers, and families!*

I am not blowing smoke here, folks. I am not crying wolf. I am simply laying out reality. The choice is not black or white, or day or night. It is much starker. *It is what kind of country do we want for ourselves and our children?*

### The Ultimate Choice

We all know how our lives are affected by who is in the White House. Governing is a set of priorities, as well as the actions and legislation that result from them. We elect a pro-union, pro-working family President and we get a National Labor Relations Board that actually looks out for the best interests of working men, women, and families. We elect a caring and decent person as President and we get both legislation that helps *all* American better their lives and our society, and the judges who enforce those progressive and needed policies.

We, as a country, as working people, were lucky in 2020 when we elected **Joe Biden** as our 46<sup>th</sup> President. We got

someone who understood working families and their goals and set out to fulfill them. We got someone who has worked on behalf of *all* Americans—regardless of race, religion, economic and legal status, or personal lifestyle.

Far more importantly, *we elected a man who believes in America, who believes in our Constitution and our system of government, which has stood the test of time for almost 250 years. We elected a man who reveres democracy, the rule of law, and the absolute importance of maintaining those precious gifts that our Founding Fathers gave us!*

Now, compare President Biden to the man who is just about a lock to be his opponent in November. You know who he is. And by now, you most certainly know what he stands for. But in case you're unsure, allow me to summarize what Donald Trump stands for:

- **The big lie: The 2020 election was stolen from him (it wasn't!).**
- Me, me, me: I don't care about this country, working people and families, the rule of law, the Constitution or, really, about anything that doesn't help me.
- **Division, conflict, and violence: Inciting rioting and insurrection against his own government when he was President (January 6, 2021), turning Americans against each other, other countries and people, and—worst of all—against our country's core values of honesty, respect for the law, and inclusion.**
- Sticking it to working people and families: During his four disastrous years in office, his agency regulators and political and corporate cronies did their “very best” to gut pro-labor laws and protections, destroy the federal healthcare safety net, and widen the income inequality gap.
- **Personal irresponsibility: He embarrassed us both at home and abroad. He belittled domestic political opponents and foreign leaders he didn't like—while sucking up to the brutal dictator who started an on-going war in Ukraine and boasts about it.**

Sure, some ATU Local 1277 members and families may have voted for him in 2016. Maybe some people thought he was someone “who cared about us”. Maybe some people didn't like his opponent. Maybe some people really thought he'd “drain the political swamp in D.C.”

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But, surely, brothers and sisters, after four years of his misrule and threat to democracy, we all saw him for what he is: *A dangerous, ignorant, embarrassment, who will cheerfully and deliberately trample on our Constitution and political system, along with your rights and liberties, so he can continue to do untold damage to our country for another disastrous four years.*

I am not exaggerating. I only wish I were!

A recent quote from President Biden in a speech in Boston perfectly highlights the stakes in November: “Democracy itself is on the ballot. Your freedom is on the ballot.”

### It is Not Too Early To Sound the Alarm!

O.K., you might be thinking, Brother Shaffer is talking about the November Presidential election, but the ballots we are receiving this month are for the March California primary. There is no President election to speak of on this ballot.

That’s true, but the stakes are *so high* in November that I feel I must lay out the issues as early as possible. That’s how important this Presidential election is, brothers and sisters. It’s the *preservation of our democracy, the maintenance of law and our political system, or a descent into more chaos, fear, anger, violence, and a real threat to the foundation of our country.*

I am sounding the alarm **now**. And I will keep doing so throughout the year and up to Election Day in November. That’s how important this Presidential campaign is!

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### California Labor Federation Endorsements for March 5

As always, the California State Federation of Labor has interviewed and decided on a slate of candidates for state and federal political positions. The Fed endorses candidates based on their support for the needs and goals of working men, women, and families. Your Executive Board urges you to support these men and women who have pledged to support unions and your rights and freedoms.

**United States Senate:** The State Fed is confident that all three *Democrats* running for a six-year term in Washington, D.C. are solid, progressive, pro-union legislators. Therefore, the Fed, after carefully considering all three candidates based on their voting records and support for labor’s goals, endorses either Congressman Adam Schiff, Congresswoman Katie Porter, or Congresswoman Barbara Lee. Any of the three will represent California and working families well in the senate.

#### United States Congress (All Democrats)

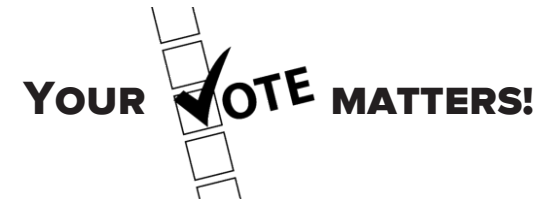
- District 26 – Julia Brownley
- District 27 – George Whitesides
- District 28 – Judy Chu
- District 29 – No recommendation

- District 30 – Anthony Portantino
- District 31 – **No recommendation**
- District 32 – Brad Sherman
- District 33 – Peter Aguilar
- District 34 – Jimmy Gomez
- District 35 – Norma Torres
- District 36 – Ted Lieu
- District 37 – Sydney Kamlager
- District 38 – Linda Sanchez
- District 39 – Mark Takano
- District 40 – Joe Kerr
- District 41 – Will Rollins
- District 42 – Robert Garcia
- District 43 – Maxine Waters
- District 44 – Nanette Barragan
- California State Senate (All Democrats)**
- District 21 – Monique Limon
- District 23 – Kipp Mueller
- District 25 – Sasha Renee Perez
- District 27 – Henry Stern
- District 29 – Eloise Reyes
- District 31 – **Dual endorsement: Sabrina Cervantes Dr. Angelo Farooq**
- District 33 – Lena Gonzalez
- California State Assembly (All Democrats)**
- District 39 – Juan Carrillo
- District 40 – Pilar Schiavo
- District 41 – No recommendation
- District 42 – Jacqui Irwin
- District 43 – No recommendation
- District 44 – Nick Schultz
- District 45 – James Ramos
- District 46 – Jesse Gabriel
- District 47 – Christy Holstege
- District 48 – **No recommendation**
- District 49 – Mike Fong
- District 50 – DeJonae Shaw
- District 51 – Rick Chavez Zbur
- District 52 – **No recommendation**
- District 53 – **Dual endorsement: Javier Hernandez Robert Torres**
- District 54 – Mark Gonzalez
- District 55 – Isaac Bryan
- District 56 – Lisa Calderon
- District 57 – Sade Elhawary
- District 58 – **Dual endorsement: Clarissa Cervantes Ronaldo Fierro**
- District 59 – Phil Chen
- District 60 – Corey Jackson
- District 61 – Tina McKinnor
- District 62 – Jose Luis Solache
- District 63 – No recommendation
- District 64 – Blanca Pacheco
- District 65 – Mike Gipson
- District 66 – Al Muratsuchi
- District 67 – Sharon Quirk-Silva
- State Proposition 1: YES**

This will provide needed funding for Californians who suffer from the ravages of mental- health disease or problems. It is a major statewide problem that must be addressed. Proposition 1 will fund housing and beds for victims, as well as out-patient services for the homeless and children in need.

*Your vote really does matter! I strongly urge you to stay on top of the issues and candidates in the upcoming elections—at all levels, federal, state, and local. Please support labor-endorsed candidates on Tuesday, March 5, or when you vote by mail.*

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### COPE Endorsements for Local 1277 Riverside and SunLine Unit Members

By Mauro Varela  
Treasurer, Local 1277

Over the years, brothers and sisters, you have come to realize how important federal, state, and local elections are to us, as working people and families, and to organized labor in general. Every election cycle, state and county federations of labor interview candidates for elective office and endorse those whose statements and records show strong support for our goals and agenda. *Your* goals and agenda!

And so it is again in the critically important 2024 elections (Please *carefully* read Brother Shaffer’s political article on page 1). Your Inland Empire Labor Council (AFL-CIO/COPE) has met with candidates for elective office at all levels and has endorsed those it feels will best advance our interests. I urge you to study this list and vote accordingly. Unions need all the political support it can get—at *all* levels of government.

**United States Senate:** The Inland Empire Labor Council recognizes that all three *Democrats* running for the U.S. Senate seat are strong supporters of working people and families. Congressman Adam Schiff or Congresswoman Katie Porter or Congresswoman Barbara Lee all have proven records of support for the needs and goals of unions and the working people and families that they represent. Any of these three legislators would ably serve us and California in the senate.

#### United States Congress (All Democrats):

- District 23 – Derek Marshall
- District 28 – Judy Chu
- District 40 – Joe Kerr
- District 41 – William Rollins

#### California State Senate (All Democrats):

- District 19 – Lisa Middleton
- District 23 – Kipp Mueller
- District 25 – Sasha Renee Perez
- District 29 – Eloise Gomez-Reyes
- District 31 – **Dual endorsement: Dr. Angelo Farooq, Sabrina Cervantes**

#### California State Assembly (All Democrats):

- District 39 – Juan Carrillo
- District 45 – James Ramos
- District 47 – Christy Holstege
- District 50 – DeJonae Shaw
- District 53 – **Dual endorsement: Javier Hernandez, Robert Torres**
- District 58 – **Dual endorsement: Clarissa Cervantes, Ronald Fierro**
- District 59 – Phillip Chen
- District 60 – Corey Jackson

#### Riverside City Council:

- Ward 1 – Philip Falcone
- Ward 5 – Gabriela Plascencia
- Ward 7 – Steven Hemenway

#### Riverside County Board of Education Trustee:

- Area 3 – Jamie Azpeitia-Sachs
- Area 7 – Maliha Williamson

#### San Bernadino County Board of Supervisors:

- District 5 – Joe Baca, Jr.

#### San Bernardino City Council:

- Ward 3 – Christian Shaugnessy
- Ward 6 – Kimberly Calvin

#### Loma Linda City Council:

- District 1 – Bhavin Jindal

#### State Proposition 1: YES

This is very much needed and well-spent money to help Californians with significant mental-health problems. Funding will provide housing and beds for afflicted men and women, and out-patient treatment sites for the homeless and children.

*Your vote matters, brothers and sisters. Never forget that! Please support your labor-endorsed candidates on Tuesday, March 5 or with your mail-in ballot.*

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