



## Kriss Worthington

Councilmember, City of Berkeley District 7  
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### CONSENT CALENDAR

September 21, 2004

To: Honorable Mayor and  
Members of the City Council

From: Councilmember Kriss Worthington

Subject: ADOPT RESOLUTION IN SUPPORT OF GROCERY EMPLOYEES FROM UNITED  
FOOD AND COMMERCIAL WORKERS BAY AREA COALITION

#### RECOMMENDATION:

That the Berkeley City Council adopts resolution in support of grocery employees from United Food and Commercial Workers Bay Area Coalition.

#### BACKGROUND:

The UFCW Bay Area Coalition represents 30,000 people in Northern California and is about to enter negotiations with grocery employers. With current trends of cutbacks in employee health care and wages, we fear that grocery employers will seek significant cutbacks during the negotiations. Many families who live in the bay area may be without adequate medical care and wages. We ask the food employers to bargain fairly and protect the healthcare for all of their employees and families.

#### FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS:

NONE

#### CONTACT PERSON:

Councilmember Kriss Worthington 981-7170.

**RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF BERKELEY IN  
SUPPORT OF THE BAY AREA COALITION OF THE UFCW EFFORTS IN  
LABOR NEGOTIATIONS**

**WHEREAS**, the UFCW Bay Area Coalition representing 30,000 people throughout Northern California is about to enter into negotiations with the grocery employers; and

**WHEREAS**, if these negotiations follow the same pattern as other negotiations with grocery employees in the Bay Area and Southern California, the City of Berkeley expect these employers to seek significant and damaging cutbacks in employee health care and wages; and

**WHEREAS**, the effects of these cuts could have a disastrous effect on the employees, their families, and taxpayers in general; and

**WHEREAS**, if the results in the recent contract settlement in Southern California were to spread across the state, the average annual wage for a grocery worker could decline from \$24,882 a year to \$18,711 a year in just 3 years; and

**WHEREAS**, this drop of \$6,171 annually will officially place most grocery workers below what a worker in a dual earner family with two children needs to earn in the Bay Area to reach self-sufficiency; and

**WHEREAS**, based on recent labor negotiations by grocery workers in the Bay Area, and southern California, by 2007, as many as 50% of workers – representing 128,000 workers and family members statewide– would no longer be insured by the joint union/employer health plan; and

**WHEREAS**, if these recent trends in cutbacks for grocery workers' contracts continue close to half of these 128,000 people could become uninsured, and nearly one quarter would have to enroll in a public health provided plan such as Healthy Families, or Medi-Cal; and

**WHEREAS**, it is estimated between \$66 and \$102 million in health care costs would be shifted on to the taxpayers annually; and

**WHEREAS**, this increase in costs would be primarily borne by Taxpayers at the county level;

**WHEREAS**, by the end of the contract in 2007, the public will have subsidized grocers an amount between of \$202 to \$293 million

**NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF BERKELEY, that the City of Berkeley is interested in**

- Monitoring the coming grocery industry labor negotiations
- Calling on food employers to bargain fairly and protect healthcare for all of their employees and their families
- Pledge to support the cause of the UFCW Bay Area Coalition and its members in their coming negotiations
- If necessary, calling for a public hearing to investigate any illegal or unfair tactics including, but not limited to, illegal profit-sharing and selective lockouts that the grocery employers use in the upcoming negotiations
- Making ourselves available to participate in contract negotiations, if requested to do so by either party
- As a last resort in the event of failed negotiations, the city pledges to honor a strike or a boycott.

