

Communication from Public

Name: UNITE HERE Local 11
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Comments for Public Posting: Please see the attached letter.

UNITE**HERE!** Local 11

June 17, 2025

Hon. Mayor Bass and City Councilmembers
200 N Spring St, Los Angeles, CA 90012

Delivered via Electronic Public Comment Form

Re: Urgent Update Regarding June 11, 2025 Letter Requesting Investigation of Alleged Fraudulent Inducement of Voters by Proponents of Referendum of Minimum Wage Ordinance for Tourism Workers (Ord. No. 188610)

Honorable Mayor Bass and Councilmembers:

We write to you to provide with information related to a June 11, 2025 letter that we provided the City Attorney, District Attorney, Attorney General, and City Clerk's office regarding allegations of misconduct during the referendum signature gathering campaign. We write to provide information related to a serious incident of escalated violence by referendum petition circulators, which took place on June 13, 2025, and a threat made by the same people toward our canvassers the very next day, as well as details about some earlier incidents. We have identified a number of the individuals accused of misconduct and have provided that information to law enforcement.

June 13, 2025 Assault, Theft, and Threats

In the evening of June 13, 2025, one of the leads of our campaign named Andrew Seymour reported to the Union that he had been physically attacked and his phone had been robbed by referendum petition circulators in front of a Superior Grocers in South Los Angeles, located at 5824 S. Vermont Avenue.

Earlier that evening, Mr. Seymour approached a referendum circulator who told Mr. Seymour that his petition is intended to increase the minimum wage. Mr. Seymour explained to the referendum circulator that what he was saying was not true and urged him to stop lying to voters. The circulator then called over multiple other men, including a young Latino man they represented to be their boss. He appeared to be a young and heavysset Latino man wearing a baseball hat and a blue hooded sweatshirt. That young man then ripped Mr. Seymour's clipboard out of his hands and threw it over his head, saying "Fuck your shit," and calling Mr. Seymour the N-word, and then the other circulators surrounded Mr. Seymour. Mr. Seymour took out his phone in order to record the interaction, but the supposed boss immediately grabbed Mr. Seymour's phone out of his hand and did not give it back.

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Then one of the circulators grabbed Mr. Seymour and punched him multiple times in the face, jaw, and the side of the head. Mr. Seymour heard someone, who he believed was the boss, yell “Stop,” and the men all ran away, got into their vehicles, and drove away. They took Mr. Seymour’s phone with them. The men then apparently used Mr. Seymour’s phone to call Connor Smith, an organizer at the Union. Connor Smith received the following threat in a call from Mr. Seymour’s cell phone, in an unknown man’s voice: “Y’all better stop with that blocking shit my N****, we just beat the fuck out of your N****. We’re dropping off homeless people to beat the fuck out of y’all so you better stop.”

Meanwhile, still outside of the grocery store, Mr. Seymour borrowed a phone to call the police, and when they arrived he filed a police report. The police officers, Officer Hagaman (41207) and Blozis (42967) of the 77th Street Patrol of the LAPD, provided Mr. Seymour with their contact information and some information regarding his case, including a reference number for his case (25108589). Mr. Seymour later went to urgent care, where he was diagnosed with a neck strain and a contusion (bruise) on his jaw.

June 14, 2025 Threatened Assault and Extortion by Same Parties

The very next day, on June 14, 2025, two other canvassers named Dawar Matute Rosales and Dante Ghazizadeh went to the same Superior Grocers at 5824 S. Vermont Avenue. They encountered a young, heavyset Latino man and a Black man outside the entrance gathering signatures for the referendum petition. When the two canvassers started talking to a third petition circulator, the Latino man came over and told them to “Get the fuck on out of here,” then proceeded to threaten, “You know what happened yesterday? We beat the last guy up. ... You going to get fucked up.”

One of the canvassers then took out his phone to try to record the interaction, and the Latino man immediately grabbed the phone out of his hand. The Latino man then pointed to the other circulator, who was a Black man who appeared to be in his late 20s wearing a backpack, saying, “That guy right there, he’s the same guy who fucked up the guy who came yesterday. You really want that to happen?” He continued to tell Mr. Rosales and Mr. Ghazizadeh to “get the fuck out of [t]here.” Then the Black circulator reached into his backpack and asked the Latino man, “Should I do it?” Mr. Rosales was afraid he had a weapon in his backpack. The Latino man said, “No, don’t do anything.” But then the Black circulator dropped his backpack and approached Mr. Ghazizadeh and Mr. Rosales aggressively as if to hit them, and the Latino man said, “Yeah, I’m not gonna stop him.” Mr. Ghazizadeh and Mr. Rosales were afraid that they would be attacked and said they would leave, and then gave Mr. Ghazizadeh his phone back. The Latino man then ran after the two canvassers’ car as they left the parking lot.

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Mr. Seymour, Mr. Rosales and Mr. Ghazizadeh each independently identified the same photograph as the man who grabbed Mr. Ghazizadeh's phone and was the supposed boss that Mr. Seymour spoke to. He appeared to be in charge of some group of referendum petition gatherers, and who threatened Mr. Rosales and Mr. Ghazizadeh—and all Union canvassers—with violence if they continued to talk to voters. This man's threats to Mr. Rosales and Mr. Ghazizadeh were consistent with the threats toward all Union canvassers that Connor Smith received over the phone the night before.

Signed witness statements from Andy Seymour, Dawar Matute Rosales, and Connor Smith were provided to the City Attorney and District Attorney, along with the card provided by LAPD in response to Mr. Seymour's report.

Updates on Incidents Formerly Reported in June 11, 2025 Complaint

As we reported in a complaint we filed with the City Attorney's office on June 11, we received multiple reports of violence by petition circulators prior to these latest incidents. Below, we include additional details from those incidents, where available, to enable your office to investigate these allegations:

1. Threats and Violence Against a Witness at Vons

On June 9, at a Vons on Sunset Boulevard, a canvasser, a man, encountered a woman circulating the referendum. When the canvasser asked what the petition was about, she replied: "Just read it." When he asked about a top funders' sheet, she said: "Get the f*ck out of here," then rifled through a backpack, pulled out a piece of paper, and waived it in front of his face, before putting it back in the bag. He was unable to discern if it was an up-to-date top funders' sheet.

The canvasser returned to his car to put on a sandwich board sign urging voters not to sign the petition. The woman then went into the store, leaving her petition booklet out on a table she had set up in front of the store. When the canvasser approached the table and picked up the petition, she ran back out of the store and shoved him, saying "don't touch my shit." She told him that "the boys are going to kick your ass." She then called two men, who showed up ten minutes later in a red car with Florida plates. The men surrounded him. When he tried to film them, one of them smashed his phone on the concrete. The man who smashed his phone said: "you're never going to get that footage." Then she hit the canvasser in the face. The woman and the two men left the area and witnesses called the police.

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2. Aggressive Misconduct Against Witness at a Ralphs in Chatsworth

On June 4, at a Ralphs in Chatsworth, a petition circulator shoved her clipboard into a union organizer's chest and also threw water from her dog's bowl at him, drenching his back and clipboard. The union organizer initially approached her to ask what her petition was about. However, she quickly escalated the situation. She got very close to him, pressing up against his body. He held his hands up, but she shoved her clipboard into his chest forcefully, trying to physically push him away. As he turned away, she sprayed him with something that he believes was perfume.

Subsequently, he entered the store to report what had occurred to employees within. He met up with another UNITE HERE Local 11 union organizer. When they exited the store and spoke again with the circulator, the woman picked up her dog's water bowl and threw the water at them. The water splashed on the first union organizer and drenched his clipboard. He began to film her, and she began to repeat: "Poor guys, someone got water on you" and "Poor babies, poor little babies," as she packed up her supplies and left.

Then on Sunday, June 15th, a SEIU organizer who was assigned to the campaign encountered her at a farmer's market. According to a police report, she shoved him.

4. Misleading Statements Witnessed by Two Different Individuals

On June 5, at a Food for Less on Slauson Avenue, a petition circulator asked a passerby, "Will you sign this petition for rent control?" This was misleading because he was collecting signatures on the referendum petition, which has nothing to do with rent control.

Other members of our campaign subsequently encountered the same person, who continued to claim the petition was about rent control. On Friday, June 13, 2025, after stating that the petition was about rent control, he showed his identification to a union organizer. Mr. Muir mentally noted his name. Mr. Muir also took a video in which the circulator says that he tells voters the petition is about rent control because it is related to increasing prices.

Petitioners Report Misleading Statements by Leadership of the Referendum Campaign

Based on our conversations with some petition circulators who have asked to remain anonymous out of fear of retaliation, it appears that several of them may have themselves been misled into relocating to Los Angeles for this job. Several of them have reported to us that they

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traveled to Los Angeles from other states in reliance on this job, believing that the referendum was intended to raise the minimum wage, not lower it. A referendum signature gatherer has

reported to us that his petition company has trained him to tell voters that the referendum was to increase the minimum wage for everyone.

These working conditions, particularly for those who were induced to relocate to Los Angeles for the job based on false pretenses, appear to contribute to the sense of desperation that has driven the petition circulators to threats, violence, and deception. Thus, we ask that your offices hold the signature-gathering companies responsible for these misrepresentations, and not just individual signature gatherers.

We urge your office to take these crimes and threats seriously. We can provide additional witnesses and recorded statements if helpful in the investigation.

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We can provide your offices with supporting information, including sworn declarations, and videographic evidence. We encourage your offices to fully investigate these concerns and take all appropriate legal action, including evaluating the validity of signatures submitted by petition circulators who are misrepresenting the content of the referendum petition. We will be glad to assist in this process.

Sincerely,

/s/

Zoe Tucker
Counsel for UNITE HERE Local 11

Jordan Palmer
Counsel for UNITE HERE Local 11

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