



Warehouse Union Local 6

INTERNATIONAL LONGSHORE & WAREHOUSE UNION

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March 19, 2015

Mr. Liam Garland, Deputy Director
City of Alameda Department of Public Works
950 W Mall Square, Room 110
Alameda, CA 94501

Dear Mr. Garland,

Over the past decade recycling has become recognized as the first, best method of handling society's refuse. Public policy has moved from disposal to diversion as the most preferable manner of handling our trash. Local 6 of the International Longshore and Warehouse Union has been working in coalition with environmental, workplace safety, religious, community, labor, and immigrant rights organizations in a Campaign for Sustainable Recycling since 2012. We have worked to support the goals of zero waste, inclusion of all parts of the community in recycling, and fair treatment for the workers who perform the difficult, dangerous and dirty job of separating the recyclable materials which are by products of our daily lives. Sorters regularly encounter materials that are hazardous, such as syringes, asbestos, medical waste, and animal carcasses. In addition, they contend with dust, dirt of unknown origin, and the physical demands of repetitive motion.

In Alameda County, workers who provide traditional sanitation services such as hauling and landfilling, generally earn a decent living, and have decent working conditions. Historically, this has not been the case for recycling workers who typically are employed by companies that serve the various cities and garbage districts in the County through long-term franchise agreements. Sorters in San Francisco and San Jose earn better than \$21 per hour and also receive health and welfare and pension coverage. Workers employed in hauling and disposal of solid waste currently earn in the neighborhood of three times a sorter's wage package at ACI. In Alameda County, sorters' wages have ranged from minimum wage to \$12.50/ hour up until this past year.

In February 2013, approximately 200 Local 6 ILWU members (and their families) working in the recycling industry held a convention and set a goal of raising their living standards. In

December 2013, Local 6 ILWU and our allies, -- working with the contracted service provider (BLT)--won the backing of the Fremont City Council for a wage and benefit standard. The Standard set a schedule for sorters' wages, which will reach \$20.94 by 2019, and required affordable family healthcare coverage. When the Oakland City Council approved a similar set of conditions (providing the same wage by 2019) in their new recycling services, franchise agreement. Alameda County achieved a progressive prevailing wage, which established a fair compensation for sorters.

Local 6 ILWU has been negotiating a first labor agreement with Alameda County Industries (ACI). ACI and Local 6 ILWU have recognized the prevailing conditions that have been established at BLT's Fremont facility, Waste Management's San Leandro facility, and California Waste Solutions' West Oakland facilities. Both the company and the union are working diligently toward a peaceful resolution to the negotiations. As the primary customers of ACI, the City of Alameda, along with San Leandro and Livermore, will play a critical role in achieving a fair resolution.

Alameda has the opportunity and the ability to support fair treatment for the recycling workers, who serve the city's residents, businesses and visitors. The proposed rate changes will significantly improve the living standards of the families of the women and men who sort Alameda's recyclables. The monthly increased cost to the "vast majority of families" who use 20- or 32-gallon containers will be less than the cost of a caramel macchiato. We believe this is a relatively small price to pay in order to provide both wage increases and health coverage, which will dramatically change how Sorters and their families live. We urge the City of Alameda to adopt the recommended increase of 10.63% that will support this adjustment to a just wage, with family health coverage.

Sincerely,

WAREHOUSE UNION LOCAL 6, ILWU

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Fred Pecker", written in a cursive style.

Fred Pecker, Secretary Treasurer