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BOARD OF SUPERVISORS**SOLANO
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May 17, 2023

The Honorable Chris Holden
Chair, Assembly Appropriations Committee
1021 O St., Ste. 5650
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: OPPOSE, AB 504 (Reyes) State and Local Public Employees, Labor Relations, Disputes, as Amended on April 13, 2023

Dear Chairman Holden,

On behalf of the Solano County Board of Supervisors, I regret to inform you that we must respectfully oppose AB 504, which would provide that it is not unlawful or a cause for discipline against a state or local public employee for that public employee to refuse to enter property that is the site of a primary labor dispute, perform work for an a public employer involved in a primary labor dispute, or go through or work behind a primary picket line. Additionally, the bill would also prohibit a public employer from directing a public employee to take those actions.

Solano County supports our unions, our employees and each bargaining unit's right to strike under the existing framework, however, the county has concerns with AB 504 and the impact of services that are not directly related to the bargaining unit that is striking. State laws governing collective bargaining are in place to ensure a fair process for both unions and public entities. However, AB 504 upends the current bargaining processes which allows striking only in specified limited circumstances. This poses a serious problem for public agencies that are providing critical public services. Allowing for any public employee, with limited exception, to join a striking bargaining unit in which that employee is not a member could lead to a severe workforce stoppage. When a labor group is preparing to engage in protected union activities, local agencies can plan for coverage and can take steps to limit the impact on the community. This bill would remove an agency's ability to plan and provide services to the community in the event any bargaining unit decides to strike.

Therefore, Solano County is in opposition to AB 504 because it would declare the acts of sympathy striking and honoring a picket line a human right. At the end of the day, including the right for sympathetic strike, does not support the people of the county who receive services from the county. For example, if medical or behavioral health clinics lack staffing because of a sympathetic strike, then there will be patients who are not seen. Further, as alluded to above, the county simply does not have enough employees to cover all the positions that this bill would apply to. This is made worse by the fact that the county is a service provider to people in the community, and often it is the only one who can provide these services to the individuals who need them. Therefore, a sympathy strike could result in individuals with no other alternative to turn to receive their services.

The county also finds AB 504 problematic because it would void provisions in public employer policies or collective bargaining agreements limiting or preventing an employee's right to sympathy strike. AB 504 would void locally bargained memorandums of understanding (MOUs) regardless of what they say about the employee's ability to sympathy strike and insert the ability for employees to engage in

Honorable Chris Holden

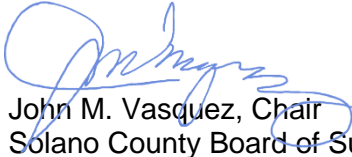
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sympathy striking. No strike provisions in local contracts have been agreed to by both parties in good faith, often due to the critical nature of the employees' job duty. By overriding local MOUs, AB 504 would grant sympathy strikers greater rights than the employees engaged in a primary strike. Under current law, both primary and sympathy strikes may be precluded by an appropriate no-strike clause in the MOU, which this bill proposes to override only for sympathy strikes.

For these reasons, Solano County must respectfully oppose AB 504.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "John M. Vasquez", is written over the typed name and title.

John M. Vasquez, Chair
Solano County Board of Supervisors

CC:

Members, Assembly Appropriations Committee
The Honorable Eloise Gomez Reyes, Assemblymember
The Honorable Bill Dodd, Senator
The Honorable Lori D. Wilson, Assemblymember
The Honorable Solano County Board of Supervisors
Karen Lange, SYASL Partners