
Guest Column: Vote No on Measure U

October 24, 2022



As president of the Del Norte County Employees Association SEIU 1021, I want to address the unfounded criticisms directed towards county employees funded by Measure R. I strongly condemn the scapegoating conducted by supporters of Measure U who solely focus on the salaries of public safety employees and staff hired for vital services and not on the benefits they provide to residents and those who visit our coastal community.

First, county employees do not make “high-paying” salaries. Some positions in the county start slightly above current minimum wage. The jobs impacted by Measure R require specific education, training and skills to optimally serve county residents. Despite wage increases, county employees’ salaries still fall behind that of other counties and businesses like Walmart and McDonald’s. The result is understaffed departments which negatively impact public safety and essential services residents demand.

Second, you can’t demand that employees take a cut in salaries and benefits and then turn around and agree that we earn low wages. That makes no sense. No union in their right mind would ever voluntarily propose wage cuts especially when salaries are low to begin with.

Third, a loss of any county employee is a loss to the community. We are a part of this county – we live here, shop here, worship here, our kids go to the same schools, play the same sports, and we attend the same

community functions. We pay the same taxes and bills, and have families we provide for. We're not part of the "haves." You want to know who we are?

We're the deputy sheriff pulling double duty to keep our streets safe

The dispatcher answering your emergency call late at night

The DA investigator investigating crimes for prosecution

The probation officer making sure that offenders follow through on the terms of their probation

The code enforcement officer tackling blight to keep our community clean

The animal control officer addressing nuisances and neglect of animals

The planner working to further develop and improve our county infrastructure

Emergency services who prepare for and respond to natural disasters and emergencies to protect our lives and property

Employees who greet and provide services and assistance to our honored veterans

If Measure U passes, there may be less of US to serve YOU. Is that what you want? Is that what you think our county deserves?

The Sheriff's Employees Association and DNCEA SEIU 1021 agree that Less is Not More, that scapegoating county employees will not help this community who we proudly serve. Measure U will not keep Del Norte County safe, clean and growing. Measure U is NOT good for you! We ask you for your support. Vote NO on Measure U.

Norma Williams

Chapter President

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