



THE METROPOLITAN WATER DISTRICT
OF SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA

Date: March 11, 2021
To: All Metropolitan Employees
From: Jeffrey Kightlinger, General Manager
Subject: Employee Petition

You may be aware of a petition that has been circulated by Metropolitan employees concerning the culture at our workplace. Board members discussed the origin of the petition at this month's meeting, and we thought it was important to offer some more details.

First and foremost, all employees -- represented by a union or otherwise -- have a right to express their opinions, to solicit the opinions of others, and to use their employer's email system to engage in protected representational activities during nonworking hours. Executive management did not direct or request this particular petition, which was created and shared by union-represented employees.

Regardless of the content, we will not stand for any form of retaliation against employees who choose to participate or not participate in a petition or any other protected activity concerning employer-employee relations.

The debate surrounding the petition reflects the difficult issues we face as an organization as we hear about and move to address concerns raised regarding sexual harassment, discrimination and other misconduct. Our success in addressing these issues hinges on our ability to face them squarely and deal with them with openness, transparency and communication. In this spirit, we are happy to announce and welcome AFSCME back to Metropolitan's Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Council.

As I have shared with you previously, our Board has directed an independent review of recent complaints as well as our Equal Employment Opportunity policies and practices. Many of you completed a recent survey by the Shaw Law Group, and we hope all who are interested in providing your input took advantage of the opportunity to confidentially and anonymously share your thoughts. We look forward to the results of the independent review and recommendations as we seek to strengthen the effectiveness of our policies and processes.

I am incredibly proud to work for Metropolitan. That is a sentiment I know is shared by many of you. A big part of our obligation as employees is a commitment to diversity, equity and inclusion, and that includes hearing and sharing all opinions in a respectful and professional manner. The opinions of all are valued and each adds to the conversation and the solutions.