

Good afternoon Chairperson Gray, Directors, fellow employees, and guests. My name is Ellen Mackey; I am an ecologist and chair of the AFSCME Women's Caucus. We thank you for this public session opportunity and invite the public to download copies of *all* our extended comments with attachments in the MWD Board, **Document Archives**.

We, the AFSCME Women's Caucus, will continue to speak out about these issues until we have affected change that allows all people regardless of gender, race, sexual orientation or identity, or disability to thrive at MWD. As public servants, we have a responsibility to bring clean, good tasting drinking water to Southern California, and we take that responsibility seriously. We understand that many may advance at MWD but too many are left behind, or bullied and harassed until they retire, emotionally devastated. That people feel safe to come forward now to the Shaw Law Group simply means conditions are ripe for change.

We are commenting on the Diversity Equity and Inclusion Council. The DEI Council is a stacked deck. After viewing the chart during the DEI summary yesterday, we were alarmed but unsurprised – the page 3 chart (**incorporated by reference**) underscored every concern we expressed in October (**incorporated by reference, 11 pgs**) when the Women's Caucus began the boycott. The Unconscious Bias Training touted at 90% completion rate for employees is because it's MANDATORY. Nothing that was stated yesterday dispels our concerns but, in fact, reinforces them. We have three points:

1. The DEI Council comprises the Employee Resource (ERGs) and Interest Groups as well as the bargaining units. Any group wishing to formalize their association and access funds for advertising must be certified: but the gatekeeper for certification is the EEO manager. She sanitizes charters and removes mention of harassment, sexual harassment from charters even the women's groups who intended to address these issues but were forced to remove them. Therefore, groups are trading their voices on women issues in exchange for some banners in the rotunda. In their group meetings, HR quickly silences any voice raising these issues *as inappropriate*.

The EEO manager states that issues of harassment and sexual harassment belong within the purview of the EEO office. So even though 87% of women within for example, engineering, say they face sexual harassment during their careers, HR decided that women's groups should remain silent on these issues. If founding members of these groups objected during their certification process and contacted Diane Pitman, she stated that the EEO manager is the gatekeeper and groups should work through her. So, for the most part, ***the DEI is a preselected group that management engineered to be compliant as ERGs charters keep them silent on harassment issues.***

2. That upper management, the presence of Shane Chapman, Diane Pitman, et al, if not, GM Jeff Kightlinger and Chair Gloria Gray, is an ***intimidating/bullying presence*** at meetings as underscored by the DEI summary yesterday.

That's 1 to 1 ratio: management to Employee Resource groups! The Women's Caucus also predicted this tactic in October.

3. The Women's Caucus still feels all employees should be able to ***listen to meetings***. If this is not possible – why not? Currently we have many zoom meetings, including Town Halls, Brown Bags and Union meetings so management deliberately excludes employees from meetings that affect us all. Instead, we get exactly what the Women's Caucus again predicted in October – a sanitized version of the meeting minutes that do not give us a full insight into the discussions. If management is sincere about the transparency that we heard so much about from the GM at Executive Committee last month then all employees could listen in, as many employees are distrustful of management summaries.

It also speaks to the ***non-transparent*** culture that we endure at Metropolitan.

We are simply pointing out that the emperor isn't wearing clothes.

Thank you

Ellen Mackey, Senior Ecologist  
Chair, AFSCME 1902 Women's Caucus

# DE&I Organizational Chart



Good morning Chairperson Murray, Directors, Executive Staff, fellow employees and guests. My name is Ellen Mackey and I am here this morning as a scientist, and as the Women's Caucus. We thank you for this public session opportunity.

As a reminder:

**Our Mission** is to proactively address a culture of sexism, racism, misogyny, ageism, nepotism, favoritism, harassment, and sexual harassment that permeates much of Metropolitan, from our offices to our field facilities.

We wish to comment on the Diversity, Equity, & Inclusion Council. First let me thank Chairwoman Gray for her leadership on this Council. However, as a 29 year MWD employee I've seen these councils before only to have them produce a document that is quietly shelved. No progress made.

The Council was created by Executive Management, the same chain of management that's retaliated against our employees for decades. The same chain of management that demands women sign non-disclosure agreements in order to settle charges of retaliation, harassment and discrimination. Keep in mind as with any complaint process that there should be a multiplier on the number of complaints as many women lack the confidence to come forward.

Initially, there was/is confusion as to whether or not the Women's Caucus has a position on the Council but I received an email in September from management requesting an alternate to the transgender representative who was individually invited to the DEI Council. They are one of the people who gave their testimony in July (they/their is their preferred pronoun). Due to their insistence and diligence that they represented the Women's Caucus not the LGBTQ+ community, we, apparently, have a seat on the Council.

However, management can't even cease harassing their own transgender show-pony (our term)! The one individual specifically invited!!

Following Council meetings they were thrown back into the same toxic work environment that they characterized in July. They are now on medical leave due to persistent harassment and abuse at their job. I'm incorporating their 2018 board letter by reference.

That shouldn't be a surprise to anyone. What should be a surprise, is that somehow management thought it would be a good idea . . . to examine internal discrimination and harassment with a Diversity Council . . . headed by this same chain of management has allowed this harassment to persist over the last fifteen years!

That is some serious cognitive dissonance.

As a result of these actions, we do not believe that management, HR or Legal will refrain from interfering in the scope or sanitizing results of the Council. We do not believe that current

MWD management has the moral courage to lead this process rather than simply reduce it to *Political Theater*.

SO, due to failures on the part of upper management, we, the Women's Caucus, are **boycotting** the DEI Council until the death-grip of management is removed from the Council. We invite other Employee Resource and Interest Groups, and Bargaining Units to join us but we understand that some may not feel comfortable with a boycott. The Women's Caucus will continue to support you.

Rather than putting the "fox in charge of the henhouse," we suggest:

1. Board members with MWD experience lead the DEI Council even if the process is more involved.
2. Upper management needs to step down from any leadership role in the DEI because despite assuaging concerns that the DEI members would drive the agenda and decisions of the Council, management has selected the facilitator, the culture assessment contractor, and the bias consultant.

This "speed" is all CYA to partially cover for the accusations brought forward by two Women's Caucus members who spoke in July. Management feels the need to show they are responsive.

3. All DEI Council consultant contracts including those for facilitation, cultural assessment, bias training, and investigations, should be held by these board members.
4. Open meetings so that all can at least listen as we lack confidence that upper management will accurately convey information and actions from the DEI Council but will attempt to control the message by filtering it. This lack of trust is underscored by the recent Ethics Office report.
5. Consultants reports should go to the board **first**, otherwise, management will attempt to massage or sanitize reports.

Metropolitan is a good place to work and can be a force for good but not with this culture. We want change but not with management in this process.

Do we really believe that the management that lead us into this quagmire and perpetuated it, can lead us out?

We think NOT!

**Boycott!**

Thank you

Good Morning Chairman \_\_\_\_\_,

Please allow me to introduce myself. My name is Lisa King and I have been working for the Metropolitan Water District for 14 years this coming April. I was chosen for the very first set of non-district apprentice classes and one of only three females to ever, in the 14 year life span of this program, go through and graduate the MWD apprenticeship. I was also the first journeywoman electrician to ever work in the desert plants. I'm sure you are aware of my colleague Gina Chavez, and it is because of her confidence in your concern for the wellbeing of the community in the desert that I am writing you.

Now as outside people are becoming painfully aware, there has always been a giant cultural rift between "Town" and "Desert". Perhaps due to the enormous growth that was constantly happening around it, the central "Town" portion of MWD diversified and became a more accepting and tolerant place to work, while the "Desert" location has been much more isolated and the mindset of "old ways are better" and "change is never good" prevail. Along with this antiquated way of thinking about doing business is also the allowed continuance of sexism, racism, and double standards in the workplace.

I want to tell you about my experience with MWD to better paint the picture of why, against my nature to avoid confrontation, I am reaching out to you to have my voice heard. I do this not only for myself, but for anyone who's been forced into a corner, made to feel uncomfortable, or taken advantage of because people still have not learned to treat everyone respectfully regardless of their color, race, gender, sexual orientation or any other detail that makes them different from the popular 'norm'.

I grew up with the district from a very young age. My father work for MWD for 27 years, my mother 14 years, and growing up at Parker Dam and Gene Camp was a much more pleasant experience. I have very fond memories of living in a community, a giant home, where I was safe to run around all day and play, where there were 5 or 6 other families with kids so we were never for a lack of friends, where the families of the community would get together to celebrate holidays in the Assembly Hall and the Swimming Hole or to help someone out who was going through a rough time. My father started for the district in 1988 when I was just three and my mother and Gina's mom ran the preschool, girl scouts, and swim lessons in the summer for all the camp kids. One of my friend's mom ran the small grocery store that also housed the town meeting hall and post office. I grew up seeing the racism and unjust work policies first hand, but I also grew up witnessing those around me come together and stand up to the issues and fight back. The problem is as time passed and as the years went on those that fought back against the injustice and kept those in power accountable for their actions are fewer and fewer. Now, the newer generation of MWD desert workers find themselves in a struggling environment where the ones in power nurtured the culture of quid pro quo, being pals or buddies meant more than the quality of work you produced, and making any waves about it is a sure way to kill your career.

As I grew into my teens, my uncomfortableness with MWD and life in the desert, became more real as I could now understand what my parents and friend's parents had been going through. I

insisted that I never could work for a place that treated people so unfairly, but my father always pushed the importance of standing my ground and that if I wanted something to change I had to be willing to help make that change. He would warn me that change did not happen overnight, that he himself had seen changes both good and bad in his time that he swore never would have happened. He stressed that I should never give up on the district because it is a good company and it was individuals making life so hard and by learning to be a hard worker and to not let others words or actions control what I choose to do.

A year after I graduated high school my parents told me about this new job position that had just been posted, Metropolitan's first ever apprenticeship program. I won't lie and say I didn't fight against it, fearing getting drawn into the problems I had seen growing up. In the end I put in my application, trusting that the good would out weight the bad, and that perhaps I could have a positive effect on the desert and bring new life into a place that had fallen so far behind the times. A year later, April 2005, I started my apprenticeship at Iron Mountain Pump Plant under Ed DeLaPaz, with my pump plant specialist Michael Williams, electricians Frank Striskovich and Lonnie Iley, mechanics Mike Jones and Mike Wieczorek, and operator Bob Melton.

On my first day on the job I drove 2-1/2 hours from Lake Havasu where I was residing to Iron Mountain to be there at 6am as instructed. At the end of the day I stayed in the Iron Mountain dorms as I was told to and in the morning I and the 5 other desert apprentices were told we were not allowed to stay in the dorms, thus following the negotiation/grievance for apprentice's rights to housing. What is not widely known is that when this happened all the apprentices in the remote locations were invited to stay with their journeyman in camp, including myself. Two of my crew offered to let me stay at their house since they were on separate shifts. This allowed me to not have to stay at the house at the same time that they were there, which in turn meant I would not have to make the 5 hour round trip every day.

I stayed in each of their houses once for my first shift. On the last day of my shift I was informed that I would not be allowed to continue to stay at my co-workers houses. When I asked why I was told that it had gotten back to "desert management" and they said it was highly inappropriate of me to be staying there and it 'looked bad'. Again I asked why? Neither Mike nor Frank would be there at the same time as I would and I was given the response that because I was a woman staying in a man's house it was too scandalous and the last thing they needed from their female apprentice was a scandal. I pushed back with the union asking why all the other 'male' apprentices were being allowed to stay with their journeymen and their families, some of who were wives and daughters, in district housing but I a female apprentice could not stay in an empty house. Again I was given the answer that because I was a female they could not allow it and was warned by the union and HR that if I continued to push the issue I would surely be let go because I had not met my 6 month probation. I made one last requested to drive a fleet car from Gene to Iron and was denied that as well.

So at the behest of HR and the Union I shut up. Defeated and fearing I'd lose my job one week in, made the drive every day in my own truck from 3:30am-6:00am to get to work on time, worked my 10 hour day, and drove back home from 4:30pm-7:00pm and this continued for the next 3 months. Once I graduated from the apprenticeship program I requested multiple times for a grievance to get

my mileage for the three months I was denied lodging on MWD property due to my gender, but I always came back denied.

A few years later, November 2007, another female came to work at the Iron Mountain Pump Plant, Theresa Cross. She was originally a recurrent worker, and she was there as new janitorial position that had been created, Operations & Maintenance Assistant. During her time there she was given special dispensations that made me very uncomfortable. Prior to working at Iron she was based out of Gene Camp and lived with her then boyfriend Alan Cross, an electrician at Intake Pump Plant, and was very adamant that she did not want a house at Iron and wanted to live at Gene even though her home location was now Iron. She was offered a house multiple times but continued to refuse it. Instead, she was given permission to take a company vehicle from Gene and would leave at 6:00am, travel the 1-1/2 hours to Iron and get to work usually between 8:00am-9:00am, and every day she was allowed to leave work at Iron between 1:00pm- 2:00pm so she could travel on company time to get home to Gene by 4:30pm. She refused to do stand-by because she did not have a house at Iron and did not stay at Iron, but yet she pushed to be allowed to not only enter the high voltage switching program but to eventually begin high voltage switching, something no one in any other janitorial position had been allowed to do. Considering my prior treatment when I first started the district I couldn't help but feel as if maybe the reason I was not allowed to stay with my journeymen, drive a company vehicle to work, or drive to work on company time was not only due to the fact that I was female, since clearly there was another female doing the very things I was denied, but that it had to have something to do with the color of my skin.

I come from a long line of Latin and Native American ancestry yet I have worked hard to try and never use my race to my advantage, and I was by now used to being put down, teased and underestimated because I was a female in a field of nothing but males, but now here was another woman being treated with exceptional favoritism and the only difference was the color of our skin and who our friends were. This was an issue that I could not help but to see discrimination in and brought up the issue with both my manager and the union, each time receiving no more than a brush off from either entity. In my time here at MWD I have gotten used to being brushed off and put down. "Now honey you just let one of those guys do the hard work" "is this a girl thing?" "well don't worry no one expects you to do what those guys can do, your just not as strong" "You women have no place here" "why don't you let us take care of it and you go clean." "You're just taking a job from a man."

Let me tell you about the incident that accompanied that last comment. It's a particular thorn in my side and really a great example of the tolerance of bigotry, racism, and sexism that has been bred in desert. Within my first year I came to find without a doubt that one of my journeyman electricians, whom I am supposed to mentor under and look up to for the next four years, had distaste for women in the workplace. I've always gotten along better with men than women because that's just me, I suppose I have more in common with guys, so I was not unprepared for the natural bit of trash talk and ribbing that came with the industrial territory. What I was unprepared for was for Frank, my journeyman, in the middle of a safety meeting in the supervisor's office, in front of the entire Iron Mountain Pump Plant staff, to turn to me and announce "I am sorry Lisa but I have to say that women have no business in the work place. I mean no offence, it's just that you should be at home, taking care of your husband and having babies. Not be here taking a job from a man, a job

that should go to a man so that he could provide for his family. I'm sorry no offence you're a woman and you don't belong here. You're wrong."

Most of the guys shook their heads and told Frank to shut up, one guy cupped him on the arm and told him he was old and crazy, all laughed it off, including me. Because, what else could I do at the time? Every time I have been put in a compromising or uncomfortable position that was always my first thought, what else could I possibly do, in an atmosphere where it's a district joke that if you get in trouble enough they make you a manager, or that as long as your white and a guy you can mess up to the moon and back and still come out smelling like roses and probably with a promotion. As women in the industrial field, if we take offense to anything that is said towards us we are labeled as "trouble makers", "sensitive", "emotional", "Bitches".

I went home that night and cried and have continued to put up with 14 years of oppression and sexism. I know now what I should have done that day was go straight to my EEO, clearly not the union since there was a union rep present for the entire spiel that day, and reported work place harassment. I should have continued to report every time I was asked suggestive questions, rubbed up on, had a derogatory comment about my gender pushed at me, had a tool thrown at me, or told I couldn't do something because I was a woman. 75% of the time I was made to feel uncomfortable or harassed I was in the presence of other people, and at no time did anyone ever step in and say to my harasser, stop now or I am going to report this, even from those men I call friends, because this is just how things are out here. I lived in a constant state of depression and fear of being fired if I pushed back too much because the truth is the desert is not a safe place to be a woman unless you're willing to sacrifice your integrity or are strong enough to shoulder the hardship and accept that standing up for yourself might get you labeled as a trouble maker. And I, unknowingly, had painted a huge target on myself by having the audacity to be a female apprentice and then a Journeywoman Electrician. As a Latina female I have learned through painful experience that in the field just how ugly sexism and racism can be.

I stuck out my time with the apprenticeship and graduated. My hardships lessened a bit because by now I had been working as hard as I could to prove to these men that I could do what they could, I was as smart as them, and I could roll with the punches and not "whine". When I was removed from the Iron Pump Plant, I had even managed to get some of the more stubborn guys who had harassed me and gave me such a hard time to leave me be because I was known for always being ready and willing to help anyone with anything. Never once would I turn down a job that was technically violating a OSHA safety code, since I had brought up such issues in the past and always been turn down with "It's not a big deal just do it", or not do a job because it was too disgusting, or because I felt uncomfortable with it. The only time I put my foot down was during high voltage switching because I was not willing to be the next switch house incident.

I would like to say that I did not ask to be removed from the Pump Plant, nor did I think working in the office could ever have been harder than working in the field, but I was wrong. When I was pregnant with my first three children I was an electrician in the plant. Ed DeLaPaz was my supervisor for all three and he was one of the better managers I have worked for. I worked up to my 8<sup>th</sup> and even 9<sup>th</sup> months at the plant and Ed allowed me light duty electrical work once I got too far along to continue my regular operation such as making new schematics for the electrical and lube oil

plumbing for all the bays, helping the operator with his rounds, filing paperwork, handling the ordering for the plant, and many other jobs that made me continue to feel like I was providing a helpful service even when I couldn't see my toes.

My removal from the plant did not come from complaints about my work habits, lack of work, or poor attitude but rather from a limp. I have a congenital birth defect Genu Varum, knocked knees, coupled with no cartilage in one knee and 50% cartilage in the other due to this condition. It is something I have dealt with my whole life, have consulted top surgeons and orthopedic specialists about, and been assured my knees will continue to do what they are doing until the day I die or medical technology advances greatly. I'm optimistic for the latter. I only disclose this so that it is understood that this is something that I had worked around and dealt with my entire 10 years at the pump plant. Rather than let my disability stop me I fought through my hardships and focused on becoming the best journeywoman electrician I could and proving to myself and others that no one or nothing was going to hold me back just because they tell me I could not do whatever I put my mind to.

I had just found out a week before that I was unexpectedly 3 months pregnant with my fourth child. Although I had notified my past supervisor once I was sure I was pregnant, this time I had not. I was having a very rough pregnancy due to stress I was going through at work and home. I had already been warned by my doctor that I was in high risk for a miscarriage. I was carrying extra weight on me from my previous pregnancies and it was putting an extra strain on my knees. One day I came in with a limp, it had been a particularly painful morning. Someone at work saw me limping, reported it to HR and the next thing I know I'm being called into my then boss Scott McBride's office letting me know a complaint was lodged about my limping and MWD was requesting a medical release from my dr. before I could return to work. I was not thrilled but complied, up to this point I had not asked my dr. to write up medical restrictions we had discussed for my knees because from my past experiences I felt that if I showed weakness it would be their excuse to remove me from the plant.

And it went pretty much as I feared. I was given the restrictions of no kneeling, no squatting, limit time on feet and limit stairs and then I was told to fill out a questionnaire to better describe my issue. I protested not understanding why I needed to go to my doctor for an issue that I'd had from day one? After being continuously pressured that there was no other choice and that I would lose my job for sure if I did not, I finally turned in the release and filled out HR's questionnaire, was then informed that I could no longer work in the plant due to the restrictions and, asked to write up a justification on why I should be given a workplace accommodation. I did so under duress of being the sole provider for my family, pregnant, and facing a threatened possible termination.

After months, I was offered two choices, take one of two positions offered or go on "extended medical leave", which meant no pay for me since I lost most of my time on my last maternity leave. I questioned how that was fair since one of my white male coworkers who had had both knees replaced and was on very similar restrictions as I was had not been told his restrictions warranted his removal from the plant; he was allowed to continue at the plant until he retired a few years later. I was met with the broken record answer of "it's the districts prerogative to decide". Frustrated, I suggested being transferred to Hinds Pump Plant since it has an elevator and I was told no because

my then father in-law was Supervisor. I asked for an exception and to be put under a different supervisor but work for Hinds, an exception that had been made in the past for others including Kelly Raymond when her husband became Unit Manager, Mary Jackson who worked at the same pump plant as her husband (Intake/Gene) but under a different manager, and even Theresa Cross who worked at the Gene Pump Plant as an operator while her husband was a specialist. The list goes on far past what I can remember, but even after pointing this out I was still denied.

I continued my researched and found out that there were normally two planner schedulers in the desert and they had not filled the second, and Larry Gerbitz, who was the current planner scheduler, was set to retire in one year. Plenty of time for me to work under him as a planner scheduler since it was a job that would utilize the money and time MWD had invested in me as an apprentice and all the technical skills I had learned from working in the field, coupled with the extra opportunity I had had to do the purchasing, inventory, and job design while on light duty during my other three pregnancies. I brought this option to the table and was denied on the premises that "The minimum requirements include five years of journey level experience in a relevant trade or craft." I was 7 months shy so I asked that they consider the four years of my apprenticeship with MWD for the extra 7 months. I checked amongst other California licensing boards and apprenticeships programs and found most of them did allow 4 years to be counted as some portion of the required experience. Again I was denied saying no exception could possibly be allowed.

I found myself pregnant, distressed, in therapy, and facing being put out on extended no pay if I did not except one of the two positions they offered me. The first was O&M Tech III for Aqueduct Maintenance team. It had the same physical demands that my current job had with a \$15 pay cut. After bringing this up the union got involved it was explained to me that the job would involve patrolling the canals and escorting the chlorine tankers. I asked if there was a guarantee that I would not be asked to do the normal Aqueduct Maintenance work and was told I wouldn't yet HR refused to have it put in writing.

It continued like this for 6 more months. I held out as long as I could trying desperately to hold on to my position at the plant or at least find something that would let me still feel like I was using all the skills I had spent the past decade learning. In the end I was placed as a 6 month temp Administrative Assistant I, which I insisted was reviewed as an Administrative Assistant II due to my computer skills and already having some knowledge of the purchasing process and was finally granted.

The irony of the entire ordeal is never had I possibly imagined that I would one day look back on everything I went through out in the field and miss the days of just having to deal with off colored comments, derogatory remarks, or having to push myself to the limits to prove I was as good as the men in my field despite my gender. That I would actually find myself in a situation that made everything else look so much more acceptable never even crossed my mind. I can honestly say that working in the office has been one of the hardest experiences of my career. I was not prepared for the manipulation, games, and hostile working conditions I was walking into.

Since coming to work in the office in 2014 I have witnessed firsthand, the rapid deterioration of our Unit manager and the cover up by the people around him. A man with a well-known reputation for being uncouth and sexist, whom in his career has made many more women than just myself feel

uncomfortable, with his racist and sexist jokes or comments. I have witnessed him not only throwing fits and cussing at employees while at work, both before and after becoming unit manager, but also his inappropriate touching of his then girlfriend in the Gene office kitchen. Once, when I wanted to talk to him about an issue I had with my then manager Jackie, I was told to “Go ahead and file a grievance. No matter what I will back her and you better be prepared for that.” He then told me that if I did not start joining in all the “group activities” such as potlucks, MWD sponsored parties, and overall cheering up and hanging out with the office staff that I would never get anywhere but where I was in this company. On more than one occasion I was very uncomfortable with Don’s presence and he was not someone I feel safe being alone in a room with and have personally been a victim of him rubbing his shoulder against mine when making references to alcohol and partying or placing his hand over me on the wall and leaning down right in my face to talk. I have moved far away from him, made an excuse to leave the room, and ignored him fearing to confront him full on with how uncomfortable he made me because of his tendency to blow up and make a scene or make fun of how others feel.

On top of the Unit Manager inappropriate actions, I have had to deal with multiple managers now that have made comments about how pretty I would be and how much easier things would be for me in the office as woman if I would just “look more normal”, wore dressy clothes, did not cut my hair or have tattoo and piercings, been accused of being a Satanist by my manager, and told that I was going to make other people think I’m a Satanist. During my last evaluation it was expressed to me by my then intern manager Jeanne, when I questioned why I was given two low marks that I felt were unjustified since I was giving no verbal warning or made aware that there were any issues, that “Nothing I say, do, think, or feel matters” and that she “was going to be here for a long time so I better get used to it”. This came from a white woman who had been working for the company for less than two years at the time and had been my intern manager for 4 months.

Less than 2 weeks later I had a mental collapse at work in which I hurt myself and a co-worker found me and reported it to the EEO. I begged her not to involve our interim manager Jeanne or intern assistant manager Roy since they were a big part of what led to my breakdown and to please call a mutual friend of ours to come help me. Of course Roy was contacted by EEO and came into my office, closed my door and told me he heard something happened. I had just talked to my friend and calmed down and was trying to head home and I let Roy know I could not talk to him and to please go away because he was making it worse. He refused to leave, sitting in the chair that barred my front door so in a desperate attempt to get away from him before I fell apart again I begged him to please go away over and over and to please send someone else if he had to. When again he refused I went into a full panic and ran out the back door in an attempt to escape once more begging him to please leave me alone. He chased me down outside the parking lot and after numerous pleas to please stop because he was making things worse I snapped and began letting out the torrent of anger and frustration at all the micro-managing and interference from my interim manager that was causing it to be impossible for me to do my job correctly including giving incorrect information about training and housing to employees and managers due to her lack of knowledge in either subject, enrolling employees and setting up classes without my knowledge which caused many over booking and missed classes in an atmosphere of training that was already tense with town having their eye on the low desert training numbers and the lack of responsibility for it, replying to emails meant for me on which she is CC and giving the wrong information, and her abrasive and

denigrating attitude in talking down to all the women on the business service team. I also brought up my issues with Nash and some of the issues I have discussed above that I have been through in the past 14 years at MWD that fueled my final snapping point that day.

I was forced into a situation I never wanted to be caught in, crying and arguing in the parking lot of the office for all to see, a complete spectacle. The fall out of all this included handling the phone calls from my freaked out family in the middle of the night since my very public stand-off made the rumor mill and many people contacted my retired parents and sibling telling them that I was in the hospital because I had gotten into a parking lot fist fight with Roy. After all was said and done, not another word mentioned about the incident from either Roy or Jeanne, EEO called once to see if I was ok. To my knowledge, not a single manager involved called 911. It was as if everyone swept the fact that I had just had a mental breakdown and cut myself up under the rug.

Two weeks later I unexpectedly get called into Roy's office with another co-worker and one union rep at which time Roy proceeded to lay into us about being blatantly insubordinate, refusing work, and refusing to talk to our interim manager. I pointed out that I had never refused a job though I did speak up about being uncomfortable about doing certain jobs such as reviewing what seemed like doctored training reports, to which my interim manager Jeanne said that was too bad when I expressed my concern. The only meeting I had ever walked out on was my evaluation when I got emotional from Jeanne's attitude that nothing I did, said, thought, or felt mattered, at which time I asked for a few minutes to go to my office and compose myself and seek union representation to which she agreed. After I left her office she immediately sent my unsigned evaluation off to HR without giving me a chance to further talk to her, a move that Roy said he approved her making.

Four weeks later, at the insistence of my therapist, I went on medical leave for stress for 3 months. I'm still dealing with the emotional turmoil working for MWD, and particularly here in the office, has placed on me. I suffer from PTSD and extreme anxiety and have now been placed on medication just to help me get through my work week. In all honesty, I truly had no plans to return to MWD, but I do have four kids to look after and need the income and medical insurance this job affords me. My first day back was awkward as I did not get a single email, phone call, or text from my manager on what she wanted me to do or acknowledging that I was back since all my usual work responsibilities had been given to the two other BST members, one of whom I later found out was a temp I had never met before.

After doing what I could most of the day I finally contacted my union rep, Gina, and let her know what was going on and that I wanted to set up an official meeting with my manager and the union to go over my roles and responsibilities due to my long absence and having been stripped of most of my core duties before I left after informing my interim manager and interim assistant unit manager that I was overworked due to fixing the issues my manager created with her lack of knowledge for my job position. Gina suggested we talk to Roy and see if Jeanne left any directions with him and if not set up the meeting for tomorrow so I would not be in the dark the next day. My understanding is that Roy was very upset that I wanted this meeting and even angrier that I wanted union representation and threatened to call HR and union headquarters to stop it, which he did follow through on. Luckily the union did grant the release time and the meeting did happen the next day, at which time Roy poked his head in asked Jeanne if she wanted him to stay to which she said it was fine if he

wanted to but Roy said nothing else, closed the door, and left. It was my first day back, already I was feeling segregated and punished as my manager did not even take the time, already informed by Clara Masennet of the day of my return, to have me reinstated in the system so I could log into the computer or access any of MWD systems.

I wish I could close this letter with the same optimism for change and the betterment of the minority community in the desert that Gina preaches to me, or even with the reassurance that these are the only hardships that I have endured, but that would be far from the truth. I know every story has two sides, and it is hard for me to be in the position of speaking out against someone like Roy, who I have known and worked with for a long time, and have grown up hearing people I respect talk well of his commitment as both a union representative and a Pump Plant Manager. The state of disarray and dilapidation the desert's management has been allowed to collapse into is disheartening discouraging, and hearing that we in the desert may still yet be subject to Nash's racist and sexist domination brings a tight panic to my chest that makes it hard to breathe.

I have taken many weeks now to write out this letter, constantly rewriting and second guessing myself for stepping out of the shadows and taking a chance at being heard. I've been told for so long to not be a girl and not whine or complain that every sentence I write to you feels trivial, and I've had to tell myself over and over that if women like me, who have seen the underbelly of life here in the desert, don't at least make an attempt to stand up and be heard that I was failing the generations that will come behind me. That even if my story is never heard past this, even if this letter finds its way to the garbage, at least I tried, I stood up and spoke out for my daughters and Gina's daughters and every other female, every other person, that comes after me in hopes that no woman or man ever has to go through the hardships I have gone through.

I deeply thank you for the concern you have shown for the women of the desert. I hate to be so blunt and long winded but there is so much frustration and pain built up over the years that it is hard to contain it all in writing. My truest hope is that out of all this adversity and turmoil someone in a position of power will hear our calls for help and, with time, a new era of equality and acceptance will be ushered into the desert making it is safe fair place for all who work here. I appreciate you taking the time to read my letter.

Sincerely,