



Bay Area Labor Unions Endorse call to Defund Police and Call on Police Officers Associations to Embrace Reform

As Black Lives Matter demands divestment in police, black and brown union members explain what over-policing does to communities and call for POA reform

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Oakland- Unions across California are coming together to call for divestment from police budgets and investment in community needs. Furthermore, these unions are demanding that the Police Officers Association embrace the movement demands or be expelled from local, state, and national labor federations. SEIU USWW, UNITE HERE 2850, AFSCME 3299, Oakland Education Association, UFCW 5, CWA 9415, and UAW 2865 have come together to issue this call. Collectively these unions represent over 100,000 workers throughout California. Umbrella organizations such as East Bay Alliance for a Sustainable Economy, San Francisco Jobs with Justice, and the Coalition of Black Trade Unionists will also join the call.

African American union members – many of whom work as essential workers - will share experiences with police profiling and violence. Union leaders will join the growing call for Police Associations to be expelled from local, state, and national labor federations.

Police Officer Associations have historically been a powerful force on the Right that have championed expanding police budgets even as public services have diminished. These Associations have also fought reforms on the use of force and racial profiling. We believe we must reduce the scope, size, and role of police in our communities. One important step in this direction is to move 50% of the Oakland police budget into community needs.

For example, the Oakland Police Department's budget has more than doubled in the last two decades. The extreme increase in spending has not corresponded to a decrease in crime rates over the same period. For 2020-21, OPD's total budget is \$330 million. This police budget is greater than the combined department budgets of: Human services, Transportation, housing and community development, libraries, parks recreation and youth development, economic and workforce development, race and equity.

"The Labor Movement fights for the common good. We want all people regardless of the color of their skin to feel safe. Police Associations need to get in line with this vision or should be ejected

from our labor federations.” Denise Solis, 1st Vice President, SEIU USWW

“I have firsthand experience of what over-policing means for the Black community. We need to move the police budget into things that my community actually needs.” – Ben May, Oakland Security Officer

What: Over 100 essential workers - janitors, security Officers, airport workers, hotel workers, and teachers with signs and large banners will speak in front of the Oakland Police Officers Association to tell their stories of oppression by the police and call for the expulsion of Police Officer Associations from local, state and national labor federations.

When: Wednesday, June 17th at 12pm

Where: The Oakland Police Officers Association, 555 5th St, Oakland

SEIU United Service Workers West represents more than 45,000 janitors, security officers, airport service workers, and other property service workers across California.

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