

June 10th, 2020

To: Portland City Council, Multnomah County Board of Commissioners,
Metro Regional Council, Port of Portland Board of Commissioners

Black lives matter.

Racism is a workplace issue. Racism is a union issue. Union members who are Black walk into the workplace carrying the impacts of racism -- violence, pain, and fear -- with them every day. At their best, unions stand for economic justice, fair treatment, equality, and the dignity of every member; it is imperative that we demand the same for all people.

We condemn police brutality, racial profiling, and the use of excessive force. We stand in full solidarity with those demanding real racial equity in our city. We affirm that Black lives matter. We acknowledge that our society is pervaded by systems of institutional racism and oppression that specifically harm Black Americans. These same systems of institutional racism and oppression have been used to promote the interests of white people for more than 400 years. We understand that those in positions of privilege have the largest responsibility to dismantle these systems.

Beyond simple acknowledgement, we commit to take action to dismantle systems of oppression within our organizations, as well as the institutions in which our members work.

- **We will create a multi-union group to facilitate discussions of racial equity.** We will identify problems and seek solutions within our unions, our collective bargaining agreements, and in the workplace.
- **We will provide training and educational opportunities** so that our members can better recognize systems of oppression.

We call on public leaders across the Portland region to invest in the services that uplift communities that have long been marginalized. As public sector workers, we provide vital services to our communities. These services are crucial to undoing inequities in our society that follow racial lines. Classrooms, parks, social services, transportation, physical and technological infrastructure, public safety, and public health must be prioritized in our public budgets. Racial justice must also mean economic justice. Public sector services play a critical role in extending employment opportunities to those who have historically been denied access. We demand that public leaders shift funding to programs and services that support marginalized groups.

As unions, we affirm our commitment to standing with our Black communities and members. We will work towards eliminating institutional and structural barriers that perpetuate racism.

In solidarity,

Suzanne Cohen, President, Portland Association of Teachers
Elizabeth Thiel, President-Elect, Portland Association of Teachers
Karen Estevenin, Executive Director, PROTEC17
Paul Cone, Portland Chapter President, PROTEC17
Farrell Richartz, Business Manager, Laborers Local 483
Will Tucker, President, Laborers Local 483
Jamie Doscher, Vice President, Laborers Local 483
Ryan Sotomayor, Recording Secretary, Laborers Local 483
Ellen Ino, Executive Board Member at Large, Laborers Local 483
Andrew Sterling, Executive Board Member at Large, Laborers Local 483
Rob Martineau, President AFSCME Local 189
John Duran, Secretary-Treasurer AFSCME Local 189
Elizabeth Goetzinger, President, AFSCME Local 3580
Rob Nathan, Vice President, AFSCME Local 3580
Percy Winters Jr, President, AFSCME Local 88
Raymond De Silva, Vice President, AFSCME Local 88
Garth Bachman, Business Manager, IBEW Local 48
Lisa Serrano, Representative/Organizer, IBEW Local 48
Jenna Bazner, Business Representative, IBEW Local 48