

From: Kyle Brierley
To: [City Clerk's Office](#)
Subject: Collective Bargaining Comments
Date: Monday, February 7, 2022 9:14:49 AM

CAUTION: This message is from an external sender - Do not open attachments or click links unless you recognize the sender's address and know the content is safe.

My name is Kyle Brierley and I am a member of the Richmond Firefighters Association local 995. I speak tonight in favor of collective bargaining for all city employees. I am asking for your support of this ordinance and for the committee to recommend this ordinance to the full council. Collective bargaining will give employees the opportunity to have their voices heard in negotiating pay, benefits, retirement, and healthcare while creating a safer environment in the workplace and a safer environment for the citizens of the city.

For years we have fallen short of getting the compensation/benefits that we need and deserve. This is evident by the unprecedented numbers of people leaving this department prior to retirement to work for other jurisdictions or entirely different lines of work. Without collective bargaining, I do not foresee us getting caught up to where we need to be.

From: Adam B
To: [City Clerk's Office](#)
Subject: Collective bargaining written comment
Date: Monday, February 7, 2022 7:05:04 AM

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I would like to provide written comment for tonight's meeting.

My name is Adam Belcastro, and I am a resident of the city of Richmond. I am also a member of the Richmond Firefighters Association local 995. I write in this comment tonight in favor of collective bargaining for ALL city employees. I am asking for your support of this ordinance and for the committee to recommend this ordinance to the full council. Collective bargaining will give employees the opportunity to have their voices heard in negotiating pay, benefits, retirement, and healthcare while creating a safer environment in the work place and a safer environment for the citizens of the city. The time to act is now.

Thank you

From: fyrwomn Jamie Potter
To: [City Clerk's Office](#)
Subject: Comment for meeting today
Date: Monday, February 7, 2022 9:52:33 AM

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I would like to provide written comment for tonights meeting:

My name is Jamie Potter, I am a member for the Richmond Firefighters Association Local 995. That being stated, I would like to comment in favor of collective bargaining for ALL City of Richmond employees. This would provide an ability for employee voices to be heard in negotiation for pay, retirement, and other City benefits. My hope would be to help retain the employees left standing with the history, knowledge and experience needed to keep the City safe and moving forward. Without this, we may continue to loose people at an alarming rate due to in part the exact areas where collective bargaining would benefit. Thank you,

Jamie Potter

From: logan lipscomb
To: [City Clerk's Office](#)
Date: Monday, February 7, 2022 9:47:29 AM

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I would like to provide written comment for tonight's meeting.

My name is Logan Lipscomb, and I am a resident of the city of Richmond. I am also a member of the Richmond Firefighters Association local 995. I write in this comment tonight in favor of collective bargaining for ALL city employees. I am asking for your support of this ordinance and for the committee to recommend this ordinance to the full council. Collective bargaining will give employees the opportunity to have their voices heard in negotiating pay, benefits, retirement, and healthcare while creating a safer environment in the work place and a safer environment for the citizens of the city. The time to act is now.

Thank you

From: Mel Borja
To: [City Clerk's Office](#)
Cc: [Laura Goren](#)
Subject: Mel Borja, TCI - Testimony for Tonight's City Council Meeting
Date: Monday, February 7, 2022 9:42:55 AM
Attachments: [TCI RVA testimony CB Feb. 7th 2022.pdf](#)

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Good morning,

I am signed up to speak at tonight's city council meeting and I wanted to provide my remarks in written format in advance as well. They are attached to this email.

Thank you for your time and attention.

Best,

Richmond Testimony on Local-Level Collective Bargaining (2/7/22)

Mel Borja, The Commonwealth Institute for Fiscal Analysis
mel@thecommonwealthinstitute.org

Good evening.

My name is Mel Borja and I'm the worker power policy analyst for The Commonwealth Institute for Fiscal Analysis, a local non-profit organization that advances racial and economic justice in Virginia. I am also a city resident.

We support collective bargaining for city workers because key findings from an analysis we published in January demonstrate that collective bargaining is an economic and racial justice imperative for city employees. Research also shows that collective bargaining benefits working people and communities as a whole, since the resulting reduction in turnover and increase in employee voice improves the quality of public services.

Quite frankly, far too many local public employees in the City of Richmond cannot afford to live in the city they serve. A review of current salaries shows that 1 in 8 general city workers who work full-time and year-round do not make enough to support themselves, and 4 out of 5 do not make enough to support a family.

We wish to emphasize that the problem of low pay is not concentrated in one type of work. Our review found that across a range of departments, from the city library to parks and rec to public works, a large share of workers could not support themselves or a family.

Furthermore, workers of color are often in lower-paid positions and are likely to benefit the most from the protections of collective bargaining. Here in Richmond, we found that City employees who are Black and/or Latinx are more likely to be paid low wages. 85% of Latinx city workers and 86% of Black city workers were paid less than the cost of supporting a family in the city they serve. More generally, because three out of every five city workers is Black, low wages for local public employees creates particular challenges for Black families and communities. These are the very employees who stand to benefit the most from the fair and clear standards provided by unionization. And because women are more likely than men to work in the public sector, strong collective bargaining rights can help address the broader problem of gender pay disparities.

Collective bargaining is also good for all Richmond residents, regardless of if they work for the city. The city's own Auditor made clear that the current employee conditions cost the City of Richmond millions of dollars a year. The Office of the City Auditor reviewed the city's employee turnover data from FY 2016 through FY 2020 and noted the median agency turnover rate was 11.3%. Using this median turnover rate and a conservative cost estimate for rehiring and training of

approximately \$15,000 per employee, the city auditor concluded that employee turnover costs the city approximately \$6.7 million per year. Such a cost estimate is in line with other research on the impact of turnover rates: the Center for American Progress found that it costs one-fifth of an employee's annual salary to replace that worker. Collective bargaining provides a way that represented workers can formally express their ideas for how to improve their workflow and workplaces. When employees are given adequate resources and an enhanced voice in the workplace through collective bargaining, turnover decreases and it becomes easier to recruit and retain new employees.

Thank you for your time and consideration of the benefits of collective bargaining to create a thriving and equitable city for all of us.

From: John Flores
To: [City Clerk's Office](#)
Subject: Written Comments for Collective Bargaining
Date: Saturday, February 5, 2022 10:11:17 PM

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My name is Sergeant John Flores and I am a member of the Richmond Coalition of Police (RCOP). I speak tonight in favor of collective bargaining for all city employees. I am asking for your support of this ordinance and for the committee to recommend this ordinance to the full council. Collective bargaining will give employees the opportunity to have their voices heard in negotiating pay, benefits, retirement, and healthcare while creating a safer environment in the workplace and a safer environment for the citizens of the city. The attrition of police officers is the worst I have seen in my 19 years as an employee with the city.

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John Flores

