

**To the Executive Boards of UFCW Local 135, the San Diego and Imperial Counties Labor Council, the San Diego County Democratic Party, and the California Democratic Party:**

Close to the end of December 2016, two lawsuits were filed that made serious allegations against Mickey Kasparian, a powerful and influential force in Labor and the local Democratic Party. The lawsuits describe activities and situations allegedly created by Mr. Kasparian that violate moral, social, and legal norms as pertains to the treatment of women, as well as stand contrary to progressive and Democratic values. More than a month has passed, and despite a third complaint being filed against Mr. Kasparian and UFCW Local 135 for hostile workplace conditions and retaliation, leadership of UFCW Local 135 and the San Diego and Imperial Counties Labor Council have only issued denials of the allegations.

Out of deep respect for the institutions from which Mr. Kasparian derives his political power and position in the community, we opted to wait and give those organizations – namely the San Diego and Imperial Counties Labor Council, UFCW Local 135, and the San Diego County Democratic Party – the opportunity to address these allegations themselves. However, after the absence of any action by the leadership of these groups to address these issues, it has now become clear that if we do not insist upon it, the complaints of these women may be dismissed and diminished in a manner that does not allow them any due process in their own workplaces.

We, the signers of this letter, call upon these named organizations to conduct a prompt independent investigation into the claims that women are suffering or have suffered sexual harassment, retaliation, and bullying in the workplace at the behest of Mr. Kasparian. We urge these organizations to protect current employees during the investigation(s) by placing Mr. Kasparian on administrative leave until the situation is resolved, as a claim has already been filed by Anabel Arauz, a current employee of UFCW Local 135 who expressed sympathy for Isabel Vasquez, that alleges Mr. Kasparian has taken retaliatory measures against employees who may not corroborate his version of the stories.

In the case of the San Diego County Democratic Party and the California Democratic Party, we ask that they take up for consideration whether it is appropriate for someone who has been accused of such serious and disturbing allegations to be representing us as a delegate to the Democratic State Central Committee.

In the current political climate, when we are actively engaged in resistance against a federal administration led by a man whose hallmarks are his blatant and well-documented sexism, his public admission to sexually harassing women, his bullying of those who are weaker than himself, and his retaliatory behavior against those who disagree with his views, it is more important than ever that we maintain moral clarity regarding issues such as the ones confronting us now. Because of Mr. Kasparian's standing in the progressive community, our ability to stand up against cultures of discrimination, bullying, and harassment is compromised, unless we are able to resolutely acknowledge that we hold ourselves to the same standard that we demand from the nation's President and his supporters. While the named organizations

may claim that this is an internal matter, we would argue that it is a matter that tests the moral fortitude of our progressive institutions, and therefore is of concern to all members of the progressive community in this region.

We believe in Mr. Kasparian's rights to due process for these allegations. And we strongly urge you to participate in that due process by conducting a prompt and comprehensive independent investigation into the veracity of these very serious allegations.

*Sincerely,*

David Alvarez, San Diego City Councilmember

Victoria Barba, Democrat

Livia Borak Beaudin, Democrat

Laurie Black, Democrat

Cory Briggs, President, Briggs Law Corporation

Marcus Bush, Democrat

Bernadette Butkiewicz, Democrat

Carolyn Chase, Democrat

Max Cotterill, Democrat

Olga Diaz, Escondido City Councilmember

Masada Disenhouse, Environmental Activist

Gabriela Dow, Owner of Mora Dow Consulting

Ansermio Estrada, Democrat

Daniel Firoozi, Democrat

Marco Gonzalez, Democrat

Ben Katz, Community Activist

Sara Kent, Democrat

Carol Kim, Democrat

Rachel Laing, Democrat

Mary Latibashvili, Democrat

Rev. Richard Lawrence

Tom Lemmon, Democrat

David Little, AD77 Delegate

Joan Little, AD77 Delegate

William Moore, Democrat

Vivien Moreno, Democrat

Fayaz Nawabi, AD77 Delegate

Gretchen Newsom, Democrat

Mona Rios, National City Councilmember

Pedro Rios, Immigration Advocate

Jose Rodriguez, AD80 Delegate

Ramla Sahid, Democrat

Lori Saldaña, former Assemblymember

Lisa Schmidt, Democrat

Cori Schumacher, Carlsbad City Councilmember

Nick Segura, Sweetwater Union High School District Trustee

Stephen Shepherd, Democrat

Kevin Smith, Democrat

Arturo Solis, Sweetwater Union High School District Trustee

Cesar Solis, Democrat

Alejandra Sotelo-Solis, National City Councilmember

Martha Sullivan, Founder and Proprietor, Grassroots Oasis

Shawn VanDiver, Democrat

Nora Vargas, Southwestern Community College District Trustee

Codi Vierra, Democrat

Michael Wray, Democrat

**Links to Key Documents:**

[Naranjo v. UFCW 135](#)

[Vasquez v. UFCW 135](#)

[Arauz v. UFCW Local 135](#)

[Frye/McCormick letter](#)

[Democratic Women's Club letter](#)