



IFPTE Local 21

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IFPTE Local 21 is a union representing more than 11,000 scientists, engineers, and other public sector workers in the Bay Area.

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Climate Change is a Union Issue

Gus Vallejo, President IFPTE Local 21

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On September 8th my union of scientists, engineers, and professionals, IFPTE Local 21, and many other unions, are joining a keystone climate march in San Francisco that will kick off protests around the country and world. We will be demanding meaningful funding for climate solutions, better regulation of corporations, and climate justice for all. **But we will be doing something else too, something that unions have been doing for decades: we will be holding the cities and counties and schools that we work for accountable.** It's not enough to talk about climate change, and to implement greener policies in some areas and not others. It's time for words to match actions, and for real change to be enacted.

Climate change is a union issue!

Unions are working people standing together to make positive change in our workplaces and climate change is a natural subject for our engagement. Public sector workers across the country are directly affected by climate change. We work on policy to decrease climate change, study the effects of sea rise, and design the sea walls. We are charged with providing clean water to our communities. We work on energy efficiency and conservation. We are deeply impacted by budgets which are drained by fires, floods, and extreme heat. Union members and our families live and work in affected areas, we breathe the air and drink the water, and our homes are in at-risk zones.



Despite the fact that my home state of California has led the way on many environmental issues, we face major barriers to meaningful climate justice from corporate interests in our state. California is one of the largest suppliers of dirty oil in the country, and our regulators are continuing to hand out permits. Unfortunately, Governor Brown refuses to ban fracking, an extremely dangerous practice that can contaminate our water and cause earthquakes through destabilization of the ground. As if the threat of naturally occurring earthquakes is not already a big enough threat to public safety!

The communities most deeply affected by climate change are the communities who have the least power in our country. As public sector workers, we are called to service because of our desire to serve public good, and the most vulnerable among us are our first priority. When the current national political climate is one where climate change and even science itself are questioned, our work is even more important. As scientists, engineers and climate professionals we have facts that will speak truth to power. As public servants, we have stories about what climate change is doing to our cities and counties.

Climate change is a union issue. And we are rising to fight it on September 8th.



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