

July 22, 2016

Co-workers and friends,

When I became a PO 15 years ago, I was armed with pepper spray and a blue binder. There were no cell phones, no computers, No MDC's and surely not a dispatcher assigned to our channel. Over those 15 years, I have seen pink slips handed out, Prop 36 voted into legislation, the majority of our department becoming armed, the implementation of AB109 and three Chiefs. Today this job is more like a law-enforcement officer than a social worker and the level of danger and stress is at its highest. We are a unique group...unique and strong.

During the early 2000's, we moved to SEBA for representation. We were "represented" by a law enforcement union but we were the "little fish in a big pond" and did not have our needs met. I sat on the Board of Directors for SEBA and soon realized that my "vote" did not count. We were constantly being pushed aside for what was best for the Sheriff's Department...so we decided as a group to go it on our own. SBCPOA has since built on the idea that "WE" know "US" best...frankly I could not agree more.

Our last contract was decent. In fact, WE literally paved the way for the other bargaining units and they adopted our "tactics". WE went into negotiations armed with the idea that WE no longer did the job WE did in the past...WE were now dealing with *prisonized* criminals due to AB109, that our Mission Statement now read "TO PROTECT THE COMMUNITY" and that our Chief was training us for battle. The county FINALLY acknowledged that we were unique in our functions and should be recognized as such.

At the last board meeting, some of our members invited the Teamsters to attend our meeting. When our members asked that WE allow the teamsters to be heard, I was expecting to hear a well-prepared proposal and their general understanding of what it is that WE do. One of the key points that stuck out to me was when one of the Teamsters referred to US as non-sworn employees. Since that meeting, I have seen fliers (with our department logo) on them, text messages saying that authorization cards are being circulated and that there is a "very short window in which to get something done" which is literally not true.

The Teamsters recently came to the Central DRC to deliver fliers to a member and got into a verbal altercation with one of our own. Another officer called The Teamsters from her personal cell phone and asked that they remove her photo from their Facebook page...the following day she received an un-invited text message that read:

"Hi this is Scott Berghoefer from the teamsters. I am contacting you again to let you know that we have begun to circulate authorization cards. We have a very short window in which to get something done. After we have a majority of cards signed we are going to approach the SBCPOA board again and ask for a peaceful affiliation, if the refuse then we will file for an election and let your members decide. Please let me know if you would like to have a meeting or anything with a small group of your co workers where we can answer any questions and hopefully sign cards. Thank you for your time. Scott"



Caption reads: Local 1932 is currently in the process of organizing the San Bernardino County probation officers. The probation officers invited us to their current unions meeting. This should be interesting.

I am asking you- Are WE there yet? Do WE have all our questions answered?

I am NOT asking you to feel the way I do. I am only asking you to REALLY stop and think about what is going on here. WE as a membership have been stale in our participation in our association. WE can and should be challenging the way WE are treated and the compensation WE are receiving. WE need to come together and figure out the best way to do that. If that entails an outside entity then ok...but please, let's do our homework. I respect that members are fed up and wanting change...I too share that sentiment, but WE need to make the right change for US. I will leave you with a quote that a fellow officer said to me yesterday..."There is no they...there is only WE"...let's all do our part in making the correct choice! Be safe always...

Sarah Baum, Probation Officer III