

Virginia Group Challenges School Labor Pact

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By Emily Alpert

A Virginia-based organization filed federal charges of unfair labor practices against San Diego Unified last week, arguing that a labor agreement on its \$2.1 billion school construction bond “enriches union officials (and) punishes nonunion workers and employers.” The agreement requires employers to provide healthcare largely through union plans, sets steep goals for local hiring, and gives apprentices from union programs the first shot at jobs to build their skills.

The National Right to Work Legal Defense Foundation sent out a press release stating that it had filed the charges with the National Labor Relations Board on the behalf of a nonunion employee:

Foundation attorneys are providing free legal aid to and filing the federal charges for Wesley Fuller, a Brady Company employee who hangs drywall and has completed all state apprenticeship requirements, and all similarly situated employees. But, because Fuller’s particular apprenticeship program was not established through union monopoly bargaining, he is being illegally denied access to employment.

The project labor agreement has also been challenged locally by the Associated General Contractors, which filed a lawsuit against it earlier this year. Proponents of the labor pact, such as the Center on Policy Initiatives, a left-leaning think tank, have countered that the pact will ensure local hiring and that AGC is “wasting taxpayer dollars and municipal resources with baseless legal threats.”