



**UFCW LOCAL 135**  
a **VOICE** for working America

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*The address above is temporary until we move into our new building in May 2026.*

**TODD WALTERS**  
*President*

**GRANT TOM**  
*Secretary-Treasurer*

**MARIBEL MCKINZE**  
*Recorder*

Monday, February 9, 2026

California Teachers Association  
P.O. Box 921  
1705 Murchison Drive  
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[dgoldberg@cta.org](mailto:dgoldberg@cta.org)

President David Goldberg -

I am writing to you as President of UFCW Local 135 to share our belief that the California Teachers Association's endorsement of Richard Barrera for State Superintendent of Public Instruction is deeply concerning and should be withdrawn.

UFCW Local 135 has firsthand experience with Barrera's record during one of the most damaging periods in our union's history. As Secretary-Treasurer of UFCW Local 135 and a senior officer at the San Diego & Imperial Counties Labor Council, Barrera was not an innocent bystander. He was part of the top leadership team during a time defined by abuse of power, serious misconduct, and a complete breakdown of accountability under former UFCW Local 135 President Mickey Kasparian.

Multiple UFCW staff members came forward with serious allegations against Kasparian that lead to the settling of lawsuits, including sexual harassment, gender discrimination, and retaliation. These allegations and lawsuits were public, widely reported, protested by community members, and devastating to those involved and to the credibility of organized labor in San Diego. At a moment when moral clarity and decisive leadership were required, Barrera chose the easiest thing possible: inaction. He did not intervene, he did not speak out, and he did not stand with the women who were harmed.

The consequences of this failure extended well beyond our local union. While serving as the number two officer at the San Diego & Imperial Counties Labor Council, the Council was ultimately trustee'd by the AFL-CIO due to dysfunction tied directly to Kasparian's manipulation and Barrera's unwillingness to do anything about it. After the Council was trustee'd, UFCW Local 135 was pulled out of the Labor Council to form a rival organization, the San Diego Working Families Council, fracturing labor unity across the region and inflicting lasting damage that only recently has begun to heal. Barrera was part of that decision-making and stood with Kasparian throughout this destructive split.

UFCW Local 135 members ultimately took matters into their own hands, removing the entire leadership slate, including Barrera, and ushered in a new era grounded in accountability, transparency, and respect. That outcome was not inevitable; it took effort by many willing to rebuild our union.

Labor endorsements are not ceremonial. They are statements of values. They tell workers, educators, parents, and communities who we trust to lead, to protect the vulnerable, and to confront wrongdoing rather than accommodate it. Barrera's record demonstrates that when faced with entrenched power and clear harm, he failed to act.



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If Barrera could not stand up to a bully within his own organization, nor stand with women who were harmed under his watch, it is fair to question how he would stand up for the children, educators, and families of California.

For these reasons, UFCW Local 135 believes Richard Barrera is unworthy of endorsement by any labor organization, particularly those affiliated with the AFL-CIO. We urge the California Teachers Association to withdraw its endorsement and to reflect carefully on the message that continued support sends to working people across this state.

Sincerely,

Todd Walters  
President, UFCW Local 135

For more information visit the following:

<http://takingbacklocal135.com>

<https://www.facebook.com/WeStandWithSandyIsabelAndAnabel>