

**Dennis A. Shaw**

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**From:** Ellen Anreder <bleicommla@aol.com>  
**Sent:** Monday, August 15, 2011 8:04 PM  
**To:** Labor Union News  
**Subject:** ABC News covers possible strike vote in SoCal

## **Grocery store workers poised to go on strike**

Link to ABC news coverage of upcoming vote:

[http://abclocal.go.com/kabc/story?section=news/local/los\\_angeles&id=8306754](http://abclocal.go.com/kabc/story?section=news/local/los_angeles&id=8306754)

BURBANK, Calif. (KABC) -- The nation's turbulent economy is raising the stakes in the ongoing contract dispute between three Southern California grocery store chains and their employees.

The workers' union is gearing up for a strike authorization vote Friday.

Healthcare remains the main sticking point between the union and the corporations representing Ralphs, Vons and Albertsons.

"I've got two kids, a house payment, but if I have to do it I have to do it. The last time seven years ago I sold hot dogs," said Ralphs employee Maribel Garcia.

In 2003, a strike that lasted more than four months cost the chains billions in lost revenue as shoppers refused to cross the lines. For some workers, it ended in bankruptcy.

This time, the economy is struggling, there is more competition for customers and fewer jobs for workers.

The grocery chains say they want to provide a solid compensation package, but in a statement Wednesday acknowledged the challenge saying they want to also "produce an agreement that will enable the companies to compete in Southern California in a difficult economy with aggressive, low-cost competition."

Economist Joel Kotkin says the two sides are locked in a fierce face-off in which neither will come out ahead.

"Fundamentally I don't see how anybody wins," Kotkin said. "I don't think labor will win, I don't think management will win and Southern California will have another group of people who are unemployed, which is the last thing we need."

Ralphs issued a statement Sunday saying, "No one wins in a strike, not our customers, not our employees, not the unions and not the companies. We have several days scheduled at the negotiation table which is the only place to reach an agreement. We encourage the unions to commit to reaching an agreement that is good for employees

and keeps jobs sustainable for our futures."

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