

## An Open Letter of Concern To Andy Stern About United Healthcare Workers-West

Mr. Andy Stern, President  
Service Employees International Union  
1800 Massachusetts Avenue, NW  
Washington, DC 20036

May 1, 2008

Dear Andy:

We are writing to you as journalists, authors, political activists, and educators who are committed to organized labor because of its important role in social justice struggles in the U.S. Some of us have longstanding ties to SEIU and have done research, writing, or labor education work involving its members, organizers, and local leaders. Those of us who deal with graduate students or undergraduates have encouraged younger people to pursue internships or full-time job opportunities with SEIU and other Change To Win or AFL-CIO unions. A number of us belong to unions ourselves. Many of us have been part of community-labor coalitions or campus-based groups like Scholars, Artists, and Writers for Social Justice (when it was still active) because we support organizing and bargaining by janitors, cafeteria workers, and other service sector employees.

We are writing to express our deep concern about SEIU's threatened trusteeship over its third largest local, United Healthcare Workers (UHW). We believe that there must always be room within organized labor for legitimate and principled dissent, if our movement is to survive and grow.

Putting UHW under trusteeship would send a very troubling message and be viewed, by many, as a sign that internal democracy is not valued or tolerated within SEIU. In our view, this would have negative consequences for the workers directly affected, the SEIU itself, and the labor movement as a whole. We strongly urge you to avoid such a tragedy.

Sincerely,

**Michael Albert**, Author, co-founder South End Press and Z Magazine\*  
**Richard P. Appelbaum**, Professor of Sociology, University of California-Santa Barbara  
**Stanley Aronowitz**, Professor of Sociology, CUNY Graduate Center  
**Sara Abraham**, Sociology, University of Toronto  
**Frank Bardacke**, Author and Educator  
**Jennifer Berkshire**, Journalist and Editor  
**Elaine Bernard**, Labor and Worklife Program, Harvard Law School  
**Fred Block**, Sociology Department, University of California-Davis  
**Edna Bonacich**, UC-Riverside  
**Eileen Boris**, Women's Studies Professor, University of California, Santa Barbara  
**Joanna Brenner**, Portland State University  
**Robert Brenner**, Professor of History, UCLA  
**Kate Bronfenbrenner**, Cornell ILR School  
**Dan Brook**, Sociology, San Jose State University  
**Michael Jacoby Brown**, Founder, Jewish Organizing Initiative  
**Anita Chan**, Australian National University

**Noam Chomsky**, Professor of Linguistics (Emeritus), MIT  
**Levon Chorbajian**, Sociology, U-Mass, Lowell  
**Dan Clawson**, Sociology Professor, U-Mass Amherst  
**Bruce Cohen**, Associate History Professor, Worcester State College  
**Tim Costello**, Labor Researcher and Author  
**Mike Davis**, Author and Professor, UC-Irvine  
**Ellen David-Friedman**, Founder, Vermont Workers Center and former VEA Staff Member  
**Michael Denning**, Professor of American Studies and Director, Initiative on Labor and Culture, Yale  
**G. William Domhoff**, Sociology Professor, UC Santa Cruz  
**Jill Esbenschade**, San Diego State University  
**Tess Ewing**, U-Mass Boston Labor Center  
**Rick Fantasia**, Sociology Dept., Smith College  
**Leon Fink**, Professor of History, University of Illinois at Chicago  
**Richard Flacks**, UC Santa Barbara  
**Bill Fletcher, Jr.** Co-founder, Center for Labor Renewal & Exec. Editor, Blackcommentator.com

**John Bellamy Foster**, Professor of Sociology,  
University of Oregon  
**Harris Freeman**, U-Mass Amherst Labor Center  
**Yoshie Furuhashi**, MRZine  
**Bill Gallegos**, Communities for a Better  
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**William A. Gamson**, Professor of Sociology,  
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**Zelda Gamson**, Senior Associate, New England  
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**Dan Georgianna**, University of Massachusetts  
Dartmouth  
**Sam Gindin**, Packer Chair in Social Justice at  
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**George Gonos**, Sociology, SUNY Potsdam  
**Suzanne Gordon**, Journalist & Author  
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**Lucy Rosenblatt**, Psychotherapist, Health  
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**Robert J. S. Ross**, Sociology Professor, Clark  
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**Kim Scipes**, Professor of Sociology, Purdue  
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**Rae Sovereign**, Labor Studies Program, Indiana  
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**Chris Spannos**, ZNet and Z Communications  
**Judith Stepan-Norris**, UC-Irvine  
**Alan Wald**, Professor, University of Michigan  
**Richard Walker**, Geography Dept., UC-Berkeley  
**Immanuel Wallerstein**, Professor of Sociology,  
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**Michael D. Yates**, Professor Emeritus, University  
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**Dr. Quentin Young**, PNHP  
**Maurice Zeitlin**, Dept. of Sociology, UCLA  
**Howard Zinn**, Author, Playwright, and Professor  
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**Michael Zweig**, SUNY at Stony Brook

*\*Partial list. All institutional connections noted for identification purposes only. (Labor Donated)*