

Deirdre Nelson

UHW Ex 029

From: Sal Rosselli [srosselli@seiu-uhw.org]
Sent: Sunday, December 02, 2007 6:35 PM
To: All Staff
Subject: Healthcare Reform and California State Council

for your info and our future discussion

From: Sal Rosselli [mailto:srosselli@seiu-uhw.org]
Sent: Sun 12/2/2007 6:32 PM
To: Andy.Stern@seiu.org
Cc: statecouncil@seiu-uhw.org
Subject: FW: Next Version

December 2, 2007

Dear Andy,

For the past twenty years, we have been working to win real healthcare reform in California to cover the millions of our state's residents who are uninsured or underinsured. Today, that group numbers at least 6.7 million over the course of the year.

In 1994, our Local Union, along with other California SEIU Locals through our State Council, strongly supported Proposition 194, which would have created a single-payer system. In 2003-4, our Local Union, along with other California SEIU Locals through our State Council, supported SB 2, which was enacted by both houses of the California legislature and signed into law by then-Governor Gray Davis. SB 2 was repealed by a margin of less than one percent when corporate interests put it to a referendum in the form of Proposition 72.

And in the past year, UHW, other California SEIU Locals, our major healthcare employers Kaiser Permanente and Catholic Healthcare West, consumer groups and patient advocacy organizations, other progressive forces and the labor movement generally, have united to win real healthcare reform in California. Although the view may look different from Washington DC, here in California I believe we are close to achieving our goal of real healthcare reform as long as we have the courage to continue to stand up for our principles and advocate for the issues that are not successfully addressed in Governor Schwarzenegger's healthcare proposal.

Specifically, a healthcare reform plan that accomplishes our goals and that California voters will support requires:

- A definition of the basic benefits that people must receive at a price they can afford if they are to be subject to an individual mandate — benefits that should include doctor's visits, preventive care, hospitalization and prescription drugs.

- Cost controls which include bulk purchasing of prescription drugs, a public insurer to compete with private insurance, preventive medicine and more information on cost and quality.

The polls show that Californians want real healthcare reform, but will reject compromises made for political expediency that sacrifice key principles like affordability and quality. I ask that you join the SEIU California State Council in its consistent support for the elements outlined above and its insistence that they be included in any final healthcare reform.

Needless to say, it is our opinion -- which we have learned is shared by many not just within SEIU in California, but outside as well -- that your decision to choose this moment to declare the abolition of the pre-existing State Council, the elimination of its officers and Executive Board, and the implementation of the new State Council, could not have been more poorly timed.

Two weeks ago, SEIU leaders in California were totally united around our goal, strategy and tactics to win real healthcare reform, and while I believe that we remain united, your actions concerning the State Council have created a major distraction from maintaining the unified focus needed to achieve our objectives.

In order to retain the focus on healthcare reform, I am writing to notify you and our colleagues in California that I will not accept any

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nomination to serve as President of the SEIU California State Council.

Although I am very proud of the State Council's accomplishments over the course of my presidency and appreciate the opportunity to bring our fight for healthcare reform to the brink of victory, I do not want any contest for this office to serve as a point of contention among SEIU Locals in California or to hinder in any way our joint effort to win real healthcare reform now.

This letter also serves as our notice to you and our California colleagues that UHW will not participate in the voting process.

The idea that organizations like SEIU Locals 6434 and 1877 will be able to fully participate while owing more than \$1.5 million in back dues defies acceptable notions of fairness with regard to union democracy. Nor do the numbers attributed to each local coincide with recent reports from the State Council regarding full members and fee payers.

Similarly, your appointment to the State Council Executive Board of representatives from two "organizing" Locals that do not represent any members and three Locals that have not been affiliated with the State Council also is, in our opinion, a violation of basic tenets of union democracy.

And finally, that such a vote is slated to occur and conclude electronically on Monday, less than 24 hours before we are scheduled to meet face-to-face in San Diego on Tuesday, calls into question the integrity of the entire process. Consequently, we choose not to participate in such flawed proceedings.

In the next several weeks, our focus in California has to be on winning real healthcare reform. One fundamental component of our ability to achieve this goal is to ensure that our State Council has the necessary resources to complete this important work.

Accordingly, on Tuesday, when the State Council convenes, UHW will ask all SEIU Locals in California to support requiring all SEIU Local Unions in arrears in dues to our state organization to comply with their financial obligations. That will help ensure that we have the financial capacity to sustain the effort necessary to succeed.

In Unity,

Sal Rosselli
President
SEIU United Healthcare Workers West