

AMERICA WORKS BEST
WHEN WE SAY . . .



PENNSYLVANIA AFL-CIO

WILLIAM M. GEORGE
President

RICHARD W. BLOOMINGDALE
Secretary-Treasurer

March 22, 2010

TO: Philadelphia Area Members of the Pennsylvania House of Representatives

RE: PASNAP Contract Negotiations at Temple University Hospital

Dear Philadelphia Area House Members:

As you are probably aware, 1,500 nurses and healthcare professionals represented by the Pennsylvania Association of Staff Nurses and Allied Professionals (PASNAP) at Temple University Hospital are nearing a March 31st strike deadline. We are writing to you to express our grave concern regarding the behavior of and positions taken by the Temple Administration during the course of these contract negotiations. The Temple leadership has embarked on a reckless path that is wholly inconsistent with that of a quasi-public institution that routinely seeks and receives enhanced taxpayer funds from the Commonwealth.

During the course of the contract negotiations, Temple has already been prosecuted and found guilty of engaging in bad faith bargaining by the Pennsylvania Labor Relations Board (PLRB). After having illegally ended a decades' long tuition remission policy for the children of employees, the PLRB declared that Temple had bargained in bad faith and ordered Temple to reinstate the benefit and to cease violating the law.

This illegal behavior is but one example of Temple's provocative approach to this Pennsylvania AFL-CIO affiliate at the hospital. In addition to seeking the elimination of the union security provision and over-reaching economic concessions from the employees, Temple is actually proposing a contract clause that would allow Administrators to discipline rank and file union representatives that publicly criticize Temple or their managers. This proposal by the Temple leadership, un-American and unconstitutional, provides some insight into their overall disposition towards the rights of their employees and to the rights of the Labor Movement in general.

Sadly, Temple's contract proposals reflect what appears to be an intention on their part to provoke a conflict with the 1,500 nurses and health professionals. Outrageously, Temple has said they are prepared to spend more on out-of-state strikebreakers to temporarily replace the regular staff than what it would cost to settle a reasonable contract. This is not the kind of behavior we expect from a quasi-public entity that relies on enhanced Commonwealth funding.

The fair standards that the nurses and healthcare professionals at Temple have worked under for many decades were once boasted about by hospital executives. The Healthcare System has not claimed that it is unable to pay for the employees' benefits but rather that it simply no longer wishes to do so. This position represents a reversal of the long-standing recognition by hospital officials that the union-won standards have enabled the recruitment and retention of highly qualified healthcare professionals to what is reputedly a challenging work environment. For the sake of the community that Temple serves, the Healthcare System should not jeopardize the retention of experienced staff by reducing standards and restricting their union and individual rights.

We strongly urge that you contact Temple leaders, sift through their inevitable wall of propaganda and demand that they bargain in good faith to reach a fair contract immediately. We also urge you to weigh any future requests by Temple for enhanced state funding against their behavior and disposition in these contract negotiations. If you have any questions regarding this matter please contact Bethany Bobb at 717-231-2852. Thank you for your consideration regarding this critical Labor issue.

Sincerely,

WILLIAM M. GEORGE, President
RICHARD W. BLOOMINGDALE, Secretary-Treasurer

/jav/UFCW-1776

cc: Pennsylvania House of Representatives Leadership

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