

NUHW News We Can Trust

From the front lines of our fight for democracy at work and in our union — June 22, 2009

A message from Sal Rosselli on the Fresno homecare election

Over 2,700 Fresno homecare workers voted for NUHW and brought this election to a 200-vote margin between NUHW and SEIU. Those 2,700 votes have shown the world that healthcare workers want out of SEIU and want their own democratic union.



SEIU lied, cheated, stole, and spent up to \$10 million in dues to claim a razor-thin advantage in this election. Soon after the election began, SEIU claimed they had more than 5,000 votes. We know today that they had nowhere close to 5,000. They lied to suppress the vote in Fresno. More grievously, SEIU lied to Fresno homecare workers and said they would stop the \$1-per-hour cuts to their wages and benefits. On July 1, every homecare worker in Fresno County will see SEIU's failure firsthand in their paychecks.

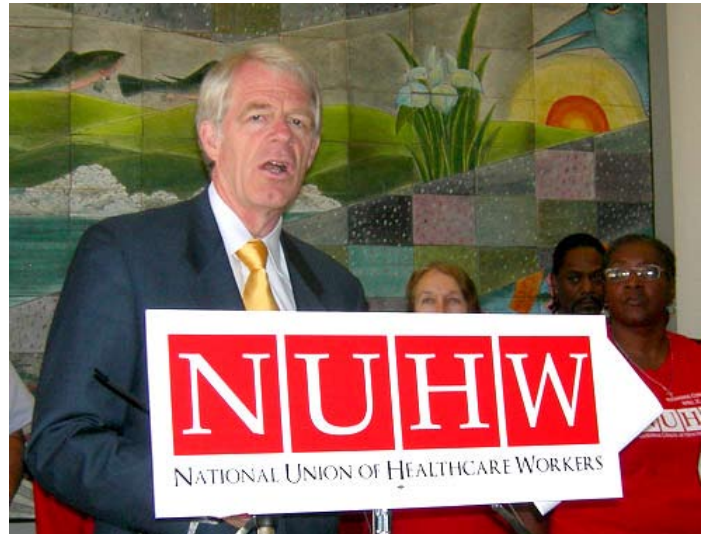
Workers told us that SEIU threatened them, offered bribes, demanded their ballots, and used other tactics that violate labor law to deny them a free choice in this election. We intend to defend Fresno homecare workers' votes by pursuing every basis for contesting this election.

Despite pouring millions of dollars into this election, SEIU could not win fair and square. And we know they can no longer afford to wage the same fight in Sacramento, in San Francisco, or at Kaiser. The thousands voting for NUHW and the narrow margin show that we have the strength to win in the face of SEIU's attacks. Our thanks go out to every volunteer and donor to this campaign; you made this possible.

I am proud to be part of a union that has accomplished so much in the face of these challenges. Our task remains clear: we will fight to build a thriving, democratic, member-led union.

While we leave no stone unturned defending Fresno homecare workers' votes in this election, today we recommit to building NUHW.

NUHW wins breakthrough wage protection for homecare providers in Sacramento and San Francisco



Sacramento County Supervisor Roger Dickinson joined Sacramento homecare providers and advocates this week to announce a breakthrough victory to protect homecare services in Sacramento County. In-Home Supportive Services (IHSS) Public Authority staff have recommended a budget package to preserve homecare providers' wages at \$10.40 per hour with all current health benefits.

The proposal is the result of weeks of grassroots advocacy by NUHW to maintain and improve wages and benefits for homecare providers using federal stimulus funds. This comes on the heels of a victory last week by NUHW in San Francisco, where Mayor Gavin Newsom's administration proposed a budget for 2009-10 that uses a costing model proposed by NUHW to maintain San Francisco County providers' wages at \$11.54 per hour.

"I thank the National Union of Healthcare Workers for their work to achieve this solution to save IHSS wages and benefits," said Supervisor Dickinson. "I believe that Sacramento County is ready to protect vital services for seniors and people with disabilities, as well as providers' wages, with no added cost to the budget."

NUHW charges that SEIU's attacks on union members were financed by employers

Last week, NUHW filed charges with the NLRB over financial ties between Bank of America and SEIU that appear to violate federal labor law. The charges are so serious that the NLRB could block all SEIU elections across the country while it investigates.

SEIU allegedly accepted at least \$88 million in prohibited financial support in the form of loans from Bank of America, an employer whose workers SEIU seeks to represent. Federal law bars loans, gifts and other financial ties between employers and unions attempting to organize their employees. Unions that take money from the companies whose workers they seek to represent are considered "employer-dominated unions."

Financial statements show that SEIU's debt grew by 30% during 2008. At the end of 2008, the union owed more than \$150 million in obligations to Bank of America, Amalgamated Bank of New York and others. SEIU's financial problems are a result of heavy spending in the 2008 election campaign, seven-figure legal bills linked to SEIU's involvement in the Blagojevich scandal and a corruption scandal in California, declining dues revenue, a loss of investment income, and ongoing battles against union members.

NUHW estimates that SEIU has spent \$15-\$20 million during the past five months in a desperate attempt to stop 100,000 California workers who are trying to switch from SEIU to NUHW. At least \$1 million per month is being spent in SEIU's attempted raids against the members of UNITE HERE.

"Healthcare workers contribute money out of our own pockets to build our union, protect wages, and fight back devastating cuts to healthcare services. It makes me sick to think of the millions SEIU has been using to attack workers, interfere with other unions, and cover up scandals instead of supporting healthcare workers and winning healthcare reform. To know that money came from Bank of America, one of the same corporations that wrecked our country's economy, adds insult to injury."

—Dannielle Estrada,
Kaiser Baldwin Park



Dannielle Estrada, Debbie Ortega, and Michael Gallegos from Kaiser Baldwin Park canvassed in Fresno to help homecare workers stand up to SEIU's attacks

SEIU gives away everything to Valley Health System

"This removes a thorn that was in our side for a long time," VHS director tells Hemet newspaper

Valley Health System workers and NUHW leaders fought a months-long battle to protect the wages and benefits guaranteed in workers' contract, including a multi-pronged legal strategy. Now, SEIU has reportedly "settled" the bankruptcy fight by giving into every one of management's demands.

Here's what VHS demanded and SEIU agreed to:

- Elimination of the training fund
- No more free healthcare
- Wage freeze (wages should have been negotiated this month)
- Change in employee classification that benefited employer on scheduling
- Elimination of the longevity bonuses
- Union dropped all legal charges except one

The workers at Valley Health System won nothing.