



OFNHP protests elimination of perio-hygienist classification

Several dozen people rallied outside Kaiser Permanente's headquarters in the Lloyd District Nov. 13 to protest the health care company's unilateral decision to eliminate the classification of periodontal hygienists. Periodontal hygienists do specialized work in conjunction with periodontists to provide treatment of advanced gum disease.

Seventeen periodontal hygienists — in a bargaining unit of 130-plus general hygienists — are members of the Oregon Federation of Nurses and Health Professionals Local 5017.

The union filed a grievance earlier this year claiming the action violated their collective bargaining agreement. The dis-

pute is scheduled to go to arbitration later this month.

"In the meantime, Kaiser has continued to proceed along the path to eliminate the perio-hygienist classification," said Local 5017 spokeswoman Temple Lentz.

The union said periodontal hygienists will continue doing the work, only at a lower pay scale. They say the action places profits over patient care.

Joining the hygienists at the rally were members of United Food and Commercial Workers Local 555, Communications Workers of America Local 7901, Oregon Nurses Association, Oregon AFL-CIO, and Jobs with Justice.

OPEN FORUM

To The Editor:

The Northwest Oregon Labor Council and the Oregon AFL-CIO oppose a proposed ballot initiative to create a Water District in Portland as an independent agency.

This proposed removal of water and sewer service from the purview of the elected mayor and City Council is the first step toward the slippery slope of privatization of public utility services.

Currently, approximately 800 union employees of the City of Portland faithfully deliver some of the highest quality water in the United States and provide reliable sewer service to the residents and businesses in Portland and surrounding communities. The proposed ballot initiative will remove all current City of Portland water and sewer employees from employment with the City of Portland and immediately make their employment with the Water District at-will, with complete and total loss of their negotiated labor contract with the City of Portland.

This proposed ballot measure is also about control. Control and condemnation of property, control of regulation of where water or sewer lines run — and

Decline to sign Water Bureau initiative

the construction contracting and lease rates for those services, control of rates for residential vs. corporate users — corporate users who would likely want to shift system costs from business to residential ratepayers. It's about the ability to have real citizen oversight rather than corporate representatives run a board.

If this measure is on the May 20, 2014 primary election ballot, please vote "no," and if you're asked to sign on to get this measure on the ballot, please decline to sign.

Bob Tackett
Executive Secretary Treasurer
NW Oregon Labor Council,
AFL-CIO

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