

# Fair Share Campaigns . . .

With the deadline for filing petitions to deauthorize fair share less than three weeks away, how has OPEU fared in its first statewide effort to implement "payment-in-lieu-of-dues?"

Better than anticipated is the answer.

"We are ahead of where most people expected us to be at this point," said OPEU executive director Thomas Gallagher. "The fact that deauthorization petitions have only been filed in 15 of our 44 bargaining units is testimony to the growing strength of our membership."

Since August 1 however, employees in three OPEU-represented state agencies have voted to reject fair share payments for non-members. OPEU lost 225 fair share payers in those elections where 317 employees cast ballots.

But as Gallagher points out, to look only at these results is to see only the first page of the story.

Thirteen OPEU bargaining units, who have never had fair share, have not filed a deauthorization petition with the Employment Relations Board. In addition, 14 OPEU bargaining units, where non-members

have paid fair share previously, have not filed a deauthorization petition.

There are over 14,000 employees in agencies where petitions have not been filed. In agencies where elections have been held or are scheduled, less than 5,000 people are employed.

Fair share is not a new concept, although this is the first time OPEU has negotiated it for all state agencies. Since 1973, Oregon law has

allowed public employe unions to negotiate fair share into contracts. This same law allows employes to reject the in-lieu-of-dues payment. It stipulates that elections be held in any bargaining unit where 30 percent of the employes sign a petition to deauthorize fair share.

Many organizers consider this percentage very low.

"If an anti-fair share group cannot get 30 percent (signatures), then

they're either very poorly organized or you've got a strong union membership or both," said Ray Abernathy, a public relations consultant to the Service Employees International Union, who specializes in union campaigns and organizing.

One of the most striking examples of the strengthening internal structure of OPEU are the classified employes at the University of Oregon who, to date, have effectively blocked a deauthorization petition.

Two years ago membership at UO hovered around 30 percent, leadership was almost non-existent and apathy was the prevailing attitude among members.

Two months ago, a group of non-members at the university formed a committee to deauthorize fair share. By the committee's own count, their petition is still over 100 names short of the required 30 percent.

Obviously things have changed since 1979. Membership is now over 60 percent, leadership is strong and the rank and file are informed and involved.

Since the anti-fair share committee was formed, members have con-

## Agencies Where Petitions Have Not Been Filed

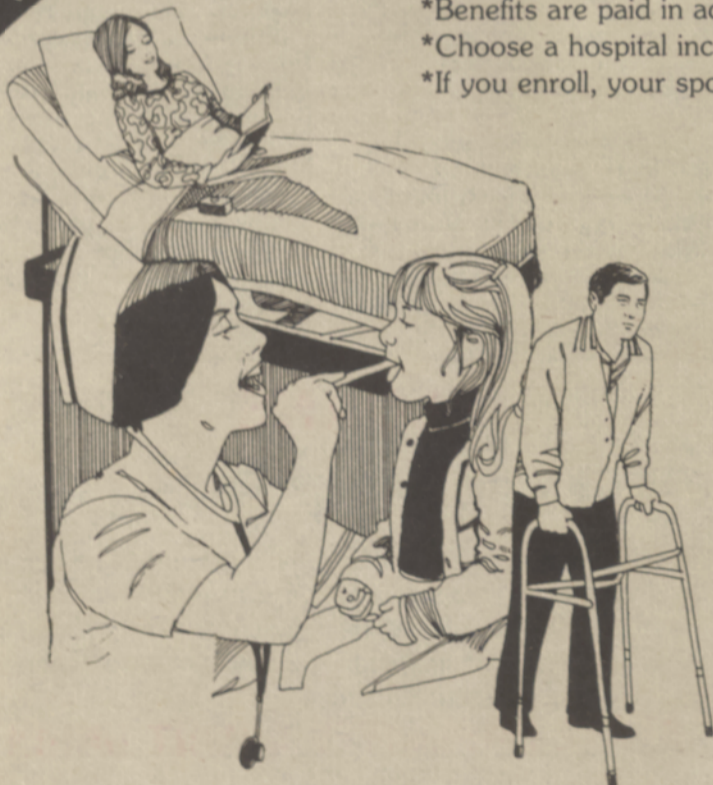
Adult & Family Services  
Blind Commission  
Children's Services Div.  
Damascus  
Eastern Ore. Hosp. & T. C.  
Education Department  
Employment Division  
Forestry Department  
Hillcrest School  
Bur. of Labor & Industries  
Law Enforcement Council  
State Library  
Mental Health Division  
Motor Vehicles Division

Oregon State Hospital  
Racing Commission  
Retirement System (PERS)  
Revenue Department  
State Fair  
Dept. of Trans. (ODOT)  
Treasury Department  
Vocational Rehabilitation  
Eastern Ore. State College  
CEPBS  
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