

Members Take Up New Strength and Unity Call to Action

Health care, funding quality public services and improved communications and public image campaigns are three central goals SEIU Local 503, OPEU members identified as priority issues during the New Strength Unity Plan campaign. SEIU International has selected Oregon as one of four pilot states focusing efforts toward building state and national healthcare campaigns.

Union President Kathie Best has appointed three committees to focus on each of these critical program areas. Union activists from across the state are beginning to meet to shape our strategy and campaign goals, both short and long term. These committees will have a separate charge, but each will coordinate and share strategies.

The **NSUP Healthcare Committee** will address the healthcare crisis-working on strategies to control health care cost, pass health care cost containment legislation, support legislators and candidates who support making quality health care affordable and accessible to all Oregonians and work with coalition partners to make health care a priority issue in Oregon.

Committee members are:

Chair, Kathie Best, SEIU Local 503 OPEU President
Joye Camacho, OHP
Michael Simpson, SCF
Rosanne Richard, AFS
Alan Youse, Agriculture
Betty Lucht, OIT
Jeannette Blankenship, Jackson Cty
Bruce Nobles, ODOT
Risa Northway, Homecare
Dave Grenbemer, Retired
David Roth, BOLI
Jeri Ruatta, SDS
Staff: Rich Peppers, Political Director
Karla Spence, PEBB Board member

The **NSUP Funding Quality Public Services Committee** will develop strategies to address funding issues that are critical to providing quality public services, including, but not limited to, tax reform or identifying alternative revenue sources.

Committee members are:

Chair, Kathie Best, SEIU Local 503 OPEU President
Joe DiNicola, Revenue
Nancy Magill, AFS
Mark Gronso, Statewide Vice Pres., ODOT
Sue Martinez, U of O
Jean Marie, MCEA
Dan Grinfas, BOLI
Terry Priest, City of Beaverton
Anne Webb, Revenue
Birdsong, Retired

Staff: Rich Peppers, Political Director

The **NSUP Communications and Public Image Committee** has the charge of looking at our

communications structure and developing better, more efficient ways of communicating with our members and the public.

Committee members are:

Chair, Kathie Best, SEIU Local 503 OPEU President
Steve Barrett, Statewide Sec-Treas., OSH
Kathi Riddell, Employment
Bessie Johnson, Linn Co.
Brenda Freddi, OYA
Wes Brain, SOU
Elizabeth Duell, SDS
Paula Burgess, ODOT
David Simpson, MHD
Star Holmberg, U of O
Mary Geiszler, PERS
Susan Humphreys, WOU

Staff: Sheila Engles, Communications Director

We know that our goals are ambitious and our ability to make positive change hinges on member involvement, strategic planning and the ability to set and achieve high standards. Members of each of these committees are charged with important responsibilities. They invite you to participate, offer suggestions and provide forums within your worksites and locals to share information and dialogue. **If you are interested in the work of one of these committees, are willing to make a commitment of personal time and want to participate, contact Kathie Best, SEIU Local 503, OPEU President.**

Meetings of each committee are open to SEIU Local 503, OPEU membership. Meeting times and dates will be posted on the Union website.

Health Benefits at Risk!

For DAS and OUS Part-Time Employees

Increases in health insurance out-of-paycheck premium for 2002 has made coverage unaffordable for part-time employees in the low-cost plan.

Many part-time employees have already shared their concerns with the PEBB Board about the impact out-of-paycheck premium increases will have in their ability to maintain coverage.

Contact PEBB and tell them that part-time employees need affordable health insurance. Your personal stories can help shape decisions at PEBB that could impact the 2002 plan year.

You can find PEBB Board member addresses on the SEIU Local 503, OPEU website at www.seiu503.org or by contacting PEBB at 800-788-0520.

Homeownership Opportunities for Union Members

All too often, working people want to buy a home but wonder if they can afford it. Now, a program in our area can help change this thought to "I never believed I could be a homeowner, and now I am, because of my union."

The Homeownership Opportunity Initiative is an affordable home mortgage initiative for members of unions affiliated with the AFL-CIO. The Initiative serves AFL-CIO affiliated union members across the Puget Sound, while putting union pension fund dollars to work by providing mortgages to union members.

The Homeownership Opportunity Initiative is designed to expand homeownership opportunities among working families by offering flexible and affordable home mortgages to union households. The initiative provides:

- low down payment mortgages (3% or 5%),
- reduced mortgage interest rate
- reduced costs for mortgage insurance
- closing-cost savings of between \$750 and \$1,000 on a typical \$150,000 mortgage
- more flexible underwriting ratios.

Members are also evaluated for local down payment and closing cost assistance (based on income levels and property locations), which helps members who qualify get access to grant or loans that can be used to buy a home faster.

Lori Ellis heard about the program from a co-worker at SEIU. She and her seven year-old daughter were able to buy a home in Keizer, Oregon with only a 3% down payment. Lori was able to save over \$40 per month in her house payment, and over \$1,000 in closing costs! The support of local labor leadership in reaching out to its membership has been the key reason the program has reached this level of success, and HomeStreet Bank looks forward to working closely with the labor community and making this program successful for working families.

Since March 1998, the AFL-CIO Housing Investment Trust, an investment company with \$2.5 billion in union pension assets, has partnered with HomeStreet Bank. The Initiative has provided more than 300 mortgages and \$50 million in financing to members in Oregon and Washington. For information, call the HomeTown Lending hotline toll free at 888-408-0066 or visit HomeStreet website at <http://www.homestreetbank.com/loans/hometownlending/>.