

NOTICES OF ELECTION

Locals and Districts may use *The 503 Voice* to give election notice to members instead of doing a separate mail notice. Upcoming publication dates of our newsletter are as follows:

Finalize Content	To Print	In Mail
June 17	July 1	July 15
Sept 16	Sept 30	Oct 14

If you intend to publish an official notice of an election in *The 503 Voice*, please notify your organizer at least one month prior to the publication date to ensure that the production schedule meets your election timelines and requirements.

ELECTION RULES

Please refer to the SEIU 503 Constitution and Bylaws as well as your Local or District's bylaws for election guidelines and rules. The following Federal guidelines apply to all elections:

- 1 Members must receive "reasonable" notice of the nomination deadline for elections.
- 2 Members must receive at least 15 days notice of the election date.
- 3 Absentee ballots must be made available to members who are unable to vote the day of the election.

Shifting health care costs to employees is not the answer

It's time to solve the crisis in health care

by Joe DiNicola, President, SEIU Local 503, OPEU

Every day our members are speaking with one voice and sending a powerful message to the 2005 Legislature: **Do something about the out-of-control cost of health care and do it now!**

Decades of Cost Shifting

For more than a decade, we've seen health care costs shifted to employees and benefit reductions for state workers. Over 30% of the state budget goes for health care costs for employers, OHP recipients, prisoners and others. During the last five years, PEBB payments have increased 75% while the consumer price index went up 13.5%. It's time to stop cost-shifting and deal with the real issues - waste, fraud and excess profits in the health care industry.

The Real Villains

We know about the three big problems in health care: drug companies, insurance companies and hospital costs. When insurance company premiums rise faster than the cost of health care, we know there's a problem. When we pay more for a service

than it costs to deliver that service, we know those profits are coming directly out of our pockets. Our members and our families just can't afford it any more.

There's been a lot of publicity in recent years about drug company scandals and the high cost of prescription drugs, but the public is not generally aware of how much of the problem is attributable to hospitals. In fact, hospital costs are increasing at three times the rate of inflation. Hospitals are making excessive profits and paying their executives millions. When they call themselves "non-profit" they should be held accountable and forced to disclose how they charge for services.

How you can help

Call your state representative and state senator. Tell them how you have been affected by rising health care costs. Send a letter. Sign up for Lobby Days at the Capitol. Make them understand that it's their job to represent us, our family, and our friends and neighbors - not the health care industry executives and their lobbyists. Also, share your health story at www.healthstory.com



Legislators, what are you going to do about it?
The second billboard, sponsored by our union and coalition partners Oregonians for Health Security and Oregon Alliance for Retired Americans, can be seen at the corner of 12th and Union in Salem until February 28. The billboard features members Linda Ingham (far left) who works at the Department of Administrative Services printshop and Xochitl Esparza (second from right) who is a program analyst and trainer with Department of Human Services.

Health care is still the big bargaining issue

Bargaining in full swing for DAS, OUS and Homecare

All three of our largest bargaining units - DAS, OUS and Homecare have begun bargaining and face many of the same challenges. Health care costs will be at the forefront of these negotiations. SEIU has taken on the health care crisis at the national level and here in Oregon.

We exchanged economic proposals for DAS and OUS on January 25th in a joint bargaining session. DAS and OUS members are approaching bargaining jointly, in order to maximize our strength.

Homecare workers have also exchanged the first set of bargaining proposals. Workers' Compensation will be the central issue for maintaining health care coverage. We are also working on this critical issue at the legislature, where we are supporting a bill that would make Workers' Compensation coverage for homecare workers compulsory.

For updated information on bargaining sessions, dates, and locations, go to our web site: www.seiu503.org. All members are welcome at bargaining sessions.

Don't forget to purple up on Wednesdays and bargaining days.



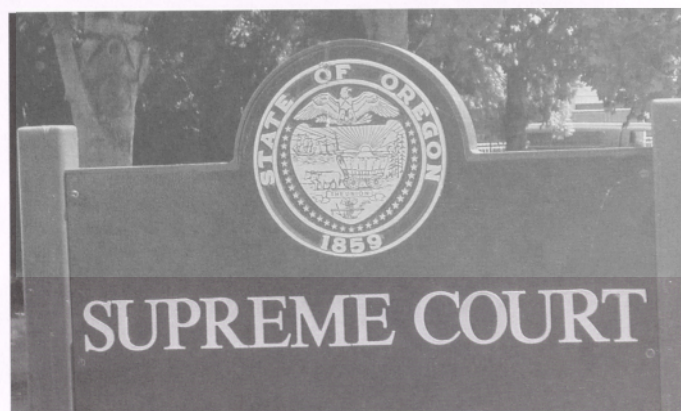
Workers' Comp is the big issue for homecare.



Members at DAS/OUS bargaining conference in December - stronger together.



OUS non-economic bargaining began Feb 4.



The Supreme Court ruling on PERS had not been released at press time. For current information on PERS, go to our web site at:

www.seiu503.org