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Special Elections Pull-out Inside

Everything you
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election.



The 503 VOICE

Vision to Action!

John Edwards endorsed by SEIU Oregon

Edwards' single-minded focus on the needs of ordinary Americans was a key reason behind the SEIU Oregon endorsement.

The Oregon State Council of SEIU, a coalition of SEIU Local 503 and Local 49, voted to endorse former Senator John Edwards for President, after seeking input from the elected members of the Boards of Directors and Political Action Committees (CAPE) of both locals. In making this endorsement, we are holding ourselves accountable to our beliefs that politicians can and should stand up for working Americans. John Edwards has a proven track record that he walks the talk.

A Detailed Plan for Affordable Health Care

Former Senator John Edwards was the first presidential candidate to issue a detailed plan to make health care affordable and accessible for all Americans. He believes in the rights of workers to form a union, and he is an outspoken supporter of the Employee Free Choice Act - which creates a more level playing field for workers who want to join unions and toughens penalties on employers who break labor laws.

Fairness for Workers is Central

Edwards has made fairness for working Americans the centerpiece of his campaign. At every opportunity, he talks about the need to reduce the power of special interests like pharmaceutical and insurance companies and to make it possible for working people to live with dignity and make progress for themselves and their families. For these and many other reasons, John Edwards earned SEIU Oregon's endorsement.

Edwards took time off the campaign trail to be the first presidential candidate to spend a day on the job with a member of SEIU. He spent a day in a nursing home in New York, accompanying SEIU member Elaine Ellis through her daily routine as a Certified Nurse's Aide. Throughout his political career, he has walked picket lines, and he has pressured employers to recognize workers' rights to organize. In the Senate, he built an impressive voting record on labor's issues.

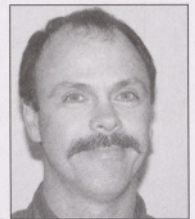
When learning of SEIU Oregon's endorsement, Edwards remarked, "SEIU is at the forefront of

the fight to make work pay and provide economic security to hardworking families. I have proudly stood with them on the frontlines of the fight for working Americans for years, and I am honored to earn their

support today. Together, I believe we can fix the broken system in Washington that has been rigged by corporate interests, and we can make this country work for regular Americans again."

“While lots of the candidates say good things about unions, Edwards says them even when he's talking to the Chamber of Commerce.”

Mike Powers is an SEIU Local 503 member at the Department of Agriculture in Salem. He works to reduce water pollution. Mike served as a delegate to the SEIU Member Political Action Conference in Washington, DC.



Workers at Rosemont Treatment Center Join SEIU Local 503

"We're excited about having a union," explained Shamus Cooke, a Residential Treatment Specialist at Rosemont. "It was a hard fought campaign, but we stayed focused on our vision of a better Rosemont School for both workers and clients and won the election hands down!"

The 60 workers at Rosemont Treatment Center and School for Girls provide day-to-day care for girls recovering from drug and alcohol addiction and other behavioral issues. They are caregivers but also serve as role models for - the kind of consistent quality care that builds trust between the girls and their caregivers. Only about 20% of the workers have been employed with Rosemont for over one year.

On October 10, workers at Rosemont voted 37-8 to be represented by SEIU Local 503 in

an election held by the National Labor Relations Board. They sought union representation to have a voice in training, safety, work rules, communications and compensation to help reduce turnover.

"In order for residents to feel empowered, they must feel safe," explains Amanda Puetz, a Residential Skills Specialist who teaches life skills and leads treatment groups at Rosemont. "Increased staffing and training will improve safety for both residents and staff. Policies that promote staff retention are crucial to a stable environment and an effective team."

Rosemont's newly organized workers hope to work in partnership with management to improve conditions for staff and residents and are looking forward to negotiating their first contract.

