

Homecare Political Action Alert

On Friday, January 26, homecare workers and their clients met at union headquarters in Salem, picked up their purple union T-shirts emblazoned with "Quality Homecare—Campaign for Justice," were briefed on legislative action and piled into cars, vans and a bus headed for the State Capitol. Homecare workers and clients met with fifteen legislators...in their offices, in the hallways and even pulling them out of committee meetings to talk about the importance of adequately funding the Homecare Commission.

Homecare workers like **Anni Smith** and



ABOVE: Homecare workers and their clients explain our campaign to Senator Peter Courtney (D-Salem)



ABOVE: Homecare workers lobby Senator Roger Beyer (D-Portland)

Maria Kaya of Woodburn met with both of their legislators and told them about the important care they provide, how much they save the state by providing in-home care and the importance of making sure the Homecare Commission gets funded. All over the capitol, homecare workers and clients were meeting one-on-one, in small groups or in large conference rooms with their legislators, sending a clear message that the voters passed BM99 and pressing them to support the implementing language. Postcards with the same message were left with legislators as well as legislative aides in offices where the legislator was not available.

Homecare lobby day was just the beginning of our political work as a union with this legislature. Legislators warmly welcomed the visits, expressed their support for the Homecare Commission and told us to keep up the pressure. Senator Frank Shields of Portland told us "**Legislators (even the friendly ones), need to be continually reminded by homecare workers' and clients' stories about how important these services are and how much the state saves by having this program.**"

Call to Action: Homecare Workers and their clients need to be ready to contact their legislators when:

- The implementing language bill gets introduced (early in February).
- The Governor sends his nominees for the Homecare Commission to the Senate Rules Committee, (some-time before the end of March).

Senate Rules Committee members are: Steve Harper, Chair; Peter Courtney, Vice-Chair; Jason Atkinson, Lee Beyer, Kate Brown, Randy Miller and John Minnis.

Call the toll free legislative information line (800) 332-2313 for information about how to contact your legislator or visit our union's web page at www.opeuseiu.org and click on our political page. For more information about the Homecare Campaign contact Andrew Barnes at (800) 521-3446, ext. 17.

Alert!

Clients who fall within the impairment levels 15 through 17 (levels of disability) are at risk of losing homecare services in the Governor's budget. Clients can contact their case managers to find out if their services will be affected. Clients should also be encouraged to contact their legislators to urge them to support funding to maintain the current eligibility for services with levels 15 through 17.