

Nursing Home Staffing Levels Need Reform

SEIU Local 503 is sponsoring a ballot measure that will establish safe staffing levels in Oregon nursing homes. This ballot measure came about based upon the experience of our nursing home members who continually find themselves short staffed, negatively impacting the quality of care that residents receive.



“Our pay and benefits and staffing ratios are affected by decisions made by state and federal politicians. We’re taking these issues on at the source, with a ballot measure that will increase mandatory staffing ratios in all nursing homes. This could bring a real change in how nursing homes attract and keep staff, improving pay and benefits for workers and services for our residents.”

Kerry Wilson

works with seniors and people with disabilities at a nursing home in Salem

“We’re taking these issues on at the source, with a ballot measure that will increase mandatory staffing ratios in all nursing homes,” said Kerry Wilson, a Local 503 member and nursing home worker in Salem. “This could bring a real change in how nursing homes attract and keep staff, improving pay and benefits for workers and services for our residents.” Many homecare workers have experience working in nursing homes and are well acquainted with the problems with staffing. In fact, it is not uncommon to hear homecare workers say the reason they left a nursing home is because they couldn’t stand the stress of not being able to provide even marginally adequate care to the residents.

Homecare workers are supporting this ballot measure to ensure safe staffing levels because nursing home patients deserve good care and nursing home staff deserve to work in an environment where they feel good about the quality of care and have peace of mind when they leave at the end of their shifts.

Ann Taylor, of Terrebonne, worked in nursing homes for about 12 years and left because of staffing issues. “I left because there was no back-up when I needed to take time off. Co-workers were often stressed and always worried about their patients being neglected.”

We will be gathering over 100,000 signatures to qualify this ballot measure by the end of June, so that it is on the ballot in November, 2006. Homecare workers are encouraged to help with this very important measure.



January 28 Working Family Conference

On January 28, our union will meet in Portland to kick off our 2006 working family agenda. With guest speakers, workshops and a review of ballot measures and candidates for office, we expect a high energy conference. Please check with your organizer if you would like more information.