

Bargaining Update, *continued from front cover*

to stop cuts to homecare senior services. Our hard work helps fund a \$53 Million budget hole.

March 2012-Present: Mediation Progress. During mediation we reached agreements on key items like policy consistencies for Personal Support Workers, wage overpayment protections, and protecting paid time off for homecare workers. After months of publically calling on the Governor to take action to stop 2,200 workers from losing health insurance, we successfully restore eligibility for qualified homecare workers to 80 hours a month.

May 2012: Arbitration Hearing Concludes. Our Union and the State present our respective cases to a neutral third party arbitrator to decide in on either all of the State's proposals or all of our final proposals. The issues discussed in 6 full days of arbitration hearings were:

Wages for Personal Support Workers: Our Union proposes for all personal support workers' wages to be increased to at least \$10.20/hour and for any worker making above \$10.20 to also receive a small bump in their wages. The State is proposing a wage floor only in the PC20 program.

Worker Voice in Our Health Care: We are proud of efforts to build a health care program from scratch that now insures approximately 4,500 workers. We want a keep our strong voice to ensure members maintain quality, affordable, and accessible health care coverage. The State proposes that it will administer health insurance without specifying how workers will have any input.

Health Care Coverage: We historically convince Kaiser to offer a statewide plan for eligible homecare workers—the first time in Oregon that Kaiser has offered to



Members and allies fill the rotunda at the State Capitol to call on the legislature to fund services.

provide coverage across the entire state! Our proposal would maintain Kaiser level health benefits that went into effect January 2012 and expand those levels of benefits to workers who currently are insured through ODS. Our team presented how the State's contribution to health insurance would likely mean dramatic benefit level reductions.

Union Power: Members are the lifeblood of our union. The State's proposal would limit the ability for most represented workers to be dues paying members and participate fully in our Union. Union membership means our voice counts, we have a vote in our leadership, and it demonstrates our power to make future improvements. The State's proposal also wouldn't provide regular data to our Union about who we represent—standard information provided by most Employers.

For the arbitrator's decision, she will consider each side's arguments about how our proposals support the welfare of the public, the State's ability to pay, the ability to retain a qualified workforce,

and the comparison of other workers who provide similar services, among other factors. She will issue a decision by June 15, but repeatedly urged both sides to return to the negotiations. We are free to negotiate and reach a settlement at any time before the arbitrator makes her final decision.

Next Steps:

Don't forget to vote. The work begins today to build a strong pro-worker majority in the legislature who will fight for the services we provide. Click [here](#) for a list of SEIU 503 endorsed candidates.

Talk to other care providers in your area! Stay tuned for more information on how this summer you can join other members throughout the state to talk about the importance of voter registration and union involvement.

For more information, contact a bargaining team member or call your organizer: 800-331-9892.