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UNION UPDATE

LOCAL 1000
SEIU
Stronger Together

Fighting secret money with organizing



By Yvonne R. Walker
President, SEIU Local 1000

Remember the secret funders who poured millions into campaigns to stop Proposition 30 and pass Proposition 32 last year? They are no longer secret, and a state watchdog agency has determined their actions were illegal.

The California Fair Political Practices Commission (FPPC) announced Oct. 24 it was imposing a record-setting \$1 million fine on several out-of-state groups that contributed \$15 million to the unsuccessful effort to pass Proposition 32, which would have silenced the political voice of workers. The ruling represents a significant victory for clean elections and California's democratic process, but secret money threats loom ahead for 2014. Some out-of-state donors have their eyes on a proposal to gut our pensions.

Retirement security under attack in 2014

Last month, San Jose Mayor Chuck Reed filed the initial paperwork to qualify a November 2014 ballot initiative designed to allow public employers to cut pension benefits for current workers.

Some of the same out-of-state groups identified by the FPPC are part of a nationwide effort controlled by billionaire brothers David and Charles Koch. This network

has also funded measures to cut public employee pensions in other states, including Wisconsin.

Reed has refused to say who is funding his campaign, but his proposed initiative is very similar to model legislation drawn up by the Koch-funded ALEC foundation. It has also been widely reported that Reed's measure has already received funding from John Arnold, an Enron billionaire from Texas.

When asked by the media whether he would seek funding from wealthy out-of-state sources like those involved with Proposition 32, Mayor Reed responded "You can't do this with bake sales."

Grassroots power prevails

Our side can't do this with bake sales either, but while Reed courts billionaires, we must build grassroots power. In 2012, our members were part of a coalition of working people who knocked on doors, made phone calls and out-organized the other side's secret funders to defeat Proposition 32 and pass Proposition 30.

So, while we may face secret money again in our fight for the retirement security of all Californians, our victory in 2012 proves that we absolutely can defeat this measure if we are mobilized and organized.

More than 1,500 members have already signed up to join the grassroots effort to stop this dangerous initiative. To take action, go to seiu1000.me/19Uvq21 or email retirementsecurity@seiu1000.org

Unit 20 activist appointed to state LVN regulatory board



Tammy Endozo

Gov. Jerry Brown has appointed Local 1000 member-leader Tammy Endozo to the California Board of Vocational Nursing and Psychiatric Technicians.

The board protects consumers from unprofessional and unsafe licensed vocational nurses (LVNs) and psychiatric technicians.

Endozo brings a deep set of skills as an LVN with 17 years of experience, including 13 for the state.

"I am grateful to be able to represent LVNs statewide, and I believe my many years of experience have

prepared me well," Endozo said. "I am also looking forward to obtaining new knowledge while serving on the board that will also help my work at Local 1000."

Highly active volunteer in politics & bargaining

Endozo is a longtime activist who was one of the most effective organizers in the 2012 elections. As the alternate vice chair of the Unit 20 bargaining team, Endozo played a big role in Local 1000's successful contract campaign.

"I believe having Tammy Endozo appointed to the board gives a voice to LVNs throughout the state of California," said Unit 20 Chair Rionna Jones. "She is a great advocate for working families. Tammy Endozo is not afraid to stand up for what is right."

Educators at state special schools organize for stipend increase

Compensation for activity leaders hasn't changed since the 1980s

Local 1000 and Bargaining Unit 3 members at the California School for the Deaf are calling for increases in stipends for educators who volunteer their time to work with students on some of the school's most vital education and social programs. These educators coach athletic teams and cheerleaders, direct the school play, lead the band and sponsor the yearbook.

Fighting for adjustments in stipends that haven't been changed in nearly 30 years, Local 1000 launched its "Play Fair" campaign Oct. 19 at the school's homecoming football game. Unit 3 volunteers mingled with the fans and organized students, staff and members of the public to sign cards of support for fair coaching pay. Hundreds of cards were collected at the game and more are being circulated.

The volunteer activity leaders are dedicated educators who teach teamwork, develop leadership and instill self-confidence. Extracurricular activities are just as important to deaf or visually impaired students in the State Special Schools as they are to any other school student.

"It's hard to keep coaches because of the low stipends," said Athletic Director and Local 1000 member Kevin Kovacs. "They put in lots of hard work and hundreds of hours of their own time."

Teacher Cindy Bronson was the assistant director of the spring play. She kept track of the hours she spent and was shocked to find her stipend pay was about \$6 an hour. "The work is very satisfying, and I know how important it is for the kids," said Bronson, "but some teachers just can't afford to contribute that much time, at those rates."

Local 1000 steward Mike Anderson researched stipends in public schools as well as deaf schools across the nation. He learned that the state was compensating coaches and other activity leaders at a rate well below similar positions in the schools he studied.

Anderson's research was part of a presentation made at the bargaining table by the Unit 3 negotiators. The state team

was impressed but failed to budge on the size of stipends.

"We aren't going to wait any more," said Unit 3 Chair John Kern. "Our coaches and sponsors deserve fair play and fair pay. We're not going to stop until the stipends are raised."

To learn more about the campaign or to sign your own Play Fair postcard, contact Bargaining Unit 3 Chair John Kern at jkern@seiu1000.org



Lilly Crisman, Brenda Call, Sulghi Hong, John Kern and Michael Boucher collect signatures in support of increased stipends for activity leaders at the California School for the Deaf in Fremont



Kids at the football game show their support for teachers

Resource Center

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