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UNION UPDATE



Local 1000's 2015 Legislative Agenda fights for working families

Bills advance worker rights and social justice

Local 1000 is sponsoring several bills this year that avoid contracting out public services, eliminate mandatory overtime for nurses, better deploy our prison libraries and librarians, and end the state's practice of letting employee-misconduct investigations drag on for years.

"Our legislative focus is to build on our members' strengths, so we have the power to better working conditions and to ensure social and economic justice for all Californians," said Local 1000 President Yvonne R. Walker. "These bills will directly improve the lives of workers we represent."

Bill to limit outsourcing

AB 1239, carried by Assemblymember Chris Holden (D-Pasadena), would limit outsourcing by making personal services contracts impermissible when they displace civil service workers. Displacement, as defined in the bill, includes layoffs, demotions, involuntary transfer to a new class or to a new location requiring a change of residence, and time-base reductions.

Nurse safety

AB 840, carried by Sebastian Ridley-Thomas (D-Los Angeles), would eliminate mandatory overtime for nurses and nursing

assistants in the state prisons and mental hospitals.

In 2001, California's Industrial Welfare Commission banned mandatory overtime for nurses in the private sector, but the ban didn't include public sector workers. AB 840 would extend the protection to the public sector. Already, 11 other states have adopted legislation similar to AB 840.

"Mandatory overtime threatens the quality of patient care and the safety of our members and the general public," said Kim Cowart, Bargaining Unit 17 chair.

The bill is similar to AB 2155, which was passed by both legislative houses last year but which failed to gain the governor's support. During that fight, hundreds of nurses, nursing assistants and other state employees staged rallies, signed petitions and sent letters to support the ban on mandatory overtime. Local 1000 members plan similar efforts this year to support AB 840.

Librarians protect our communities

SB 343, carried by Sen. Loni Hancock (D-Berkeley), would expand literacy programs for prison inmates and would require the Department of Corrections



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— Yvonne R. Walker
Local 1000 President

and Rehabilitation to consider expanding the use of libraries and librarians for those programs.

"Few people think of libraries and librarians as protecting our communities. But this legislation would use our librarians to help prisoners improve their literacy skills so they can find a job after leaving prison instead of going back to the streets," said John Kern, chair of Bargaining Unit 3, which represents prison teachers and librarians.

Adverse action deadline

AB 769, carried by Assemblymember Reggie Jones-Sawyer (D-Los Angeles), would streamline the state's civil service employee discipline process by requiring most investigations to be completed in one year.

A Leader Is Born

From member to steward and community activist

Hannah Konhoff grew up with a mother who was active in the civil rights movement, a feminist and an anti-war protester. Although she had been raised to act on her values, life compelled Konhoff to put her activism on the back burner.

"I just kind of got wrapped up in trying to survive," she said.

When Konhoff became a Local 1000 member nine years ago, after taking a position at Department of General Services, "I always meant to be active but I kept putting it off," she said. Then, two and a half years ago, her DLC asked her to pitch in with things like putting up fliers and phone banking and, after a bad management experience, she decided to take the steward training. Soon she was a union steward and began serving as the secretary in DLC 787.

Finally, she was ready to take her activism to a broader stage.

Konhoff attended a meeting of Stand Up and Take Charge, a Local 1000 initiative begun in 2013 to connect members with activists and organizations in their communities to work on economic justice issues. Konhoff's first meeting featured a film on the fight to raise the minimum wage that spoke to her and to her life history.

"I worked in fast food when I was young," Konhoff said. "And I know what it's like to have a really crappy job that you need to survive, but it's just miserable and they treat you horribly. I think those people who are standing up are just so brave. [Their stories] actually made me cry."

A connection sparked that evening between her union values and the importance of community action for Konhoff; a connection, she said, that is key to communicating with a general public that doesn't always understand labor's deep



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Member Leader

commitment to social and economic justice.

"We get so focused on what's going on with our own issues," she said. "But I think that, as a union, our only real chance for survival is if we can show the public how we're relevant to them."

Konhoff says Stand Up and Take Charge is all about building power through strategic alliances for the betterment of California as well as the continued vitality of the union. "If we can take the wonderful things that we do for our members and share them with the rest of the state," she said, "we can have a real impact on improving the quality of life for everyone."

Resource Center

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BU 21 uses JLMC to win reclass fight

School bus drivers play critical public safety role

The crucial safety role of California Department of Education's (CDE)'s Bus Driver Training Specialists will finally be recognized with new classification specifications and job titles, thanks to a hard-fought, years-long campaign by Bargaining Unit 21. The job specification revisions and the change of title to "Transportation Program Consultants" were finalized at a State Personnel Board hearing on March 5, 2015. Although discussion on compensation

for the series was not finalized, the Joint Labor Management Committee (JLMC) will continue discussion on this issue before the end of 2015.

Tony Peregrina, a member of the JLMC and a transportation consultant said, "The union fought and won these changes, because state workers should be properly recognized and compensated for the crucial work we do."