

Counter to PRMCE'S take on negotiations with OPEIU Local 8

Below is OPEIU's response to PRMCE's comments about the May 30th bargaining session.

The boxed text reflects PRMCE's May 30th comments.

Bold italicized text indicates OPEIU's response.

from PRMCE:

**Status Update: PRMCE – OPEIU Service and Maintenance Negotiations
May 30, 2019
Bargaining Update**

The parties met on Thursday, May 30. Below are the highlights:

Soon after starting the day, **OPEIU fired the mediator** assigned to assist the parties in bargaining.

OPEIU Local 8 and the Bargaining Team have lost confidence in the mediator and released him at the beginning of bargaining May 30th. OPEIU Local 8 is open to Federal Mediation and Conciliatory Service (FMCS) assigning a new Mediator since the Employer would like to continue to work with one. We just don't want our confirmed future bargaining dates cancelled. We believe we can move much further ahead and faster if the Employer's team will sit across from us at the table and provide all the information we need to understand the full impact to our Members on their TAKEAWAY benefit proposals. Next bargaining dates are June 28th and July 17th with a Contract Extension Agreement thru the end of July.

We met with the union and they presented a counter proposal with little substantive movement, meaning that many of their initial proposals from October 2018 remain unchanged, which has been a continuing pattern from OPEIU. These include making union membership and payment of union dues **MANDATORY** for all caregivers.

OPEIU Local 8, and it would probably be fair to say all Unions, in negotiations with Providence Health Systems would say the Employer has not given substantive proposals or all the information needed to assess the impact to our Members regarding their TAKEAWAY proposals. What PRMCE is referring to regarding Union dues is our proposal to make PRMCE a Union Shop which we have proposed in every Contract bargaining since 1999. Our Members at PRMCE want all employees to pay their "fair share" for Union representation.

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The union did accept the core of **our proposal on Continuing Education**, which includes dedicating both hours and dollars for voluntary professional development (up to 24 hours and \$300 per caregiver, based on FTE).

We maintained our offer to increase pay by at least 2% in the first year of the contract, provide market adjustments for specific positions, and to move the base rate of pay to \$15.45/hr. **The increase in base pay alone would result in more than 200 caregivers receiving significant wage increases. The union continues to reject these proposals.**

The key word here is “specific positions” as the \$15.45/hr. base rate would only affect a handful of positions while PRMCE claims that they are “front loading” annual increases as well as cost of living increases for those in these positions. This is not adjusting the step pay scale which our proposal of a real market adjustment means. PRMCE’s proposal is so they can hire at the rate the market in our area demands but with no “pay equity” for those employees in those classifications that have been loyally doing this work for years. OPEIU has done a market analysis on these classifications along with several others in our Contract and the wage scale needs to be increased across all wage scale steps. This new base rate of pay is not something your Bargaining Team is in support of as it does not bring up everyone else and it would cause those who do get the new base rate not to see another increase until they have surpassed this amount on the wage scale. For some people their next increase may not occur until they have hit step 10 on the wage scale – how is that going to retain employees? PRMCE Leadership says out of one side of their mouth how much they appreciate and value their loyal long-term employees but then make proposals like this?

The union continues to refuse meaningful discussion of our offer on short-term disability, paid parental leave, and other enhanced benefits.

The proposal of Short-Term Disability is not an enhanced benefit; many already pay to have this additional benefit. The STD being offered is already something that the state is going to start offering starting in 2020. Having a 7-day wait period and not being able to use it to take care of sick family members is not an enhanced benefit nor does it benefit the employee or their family. Furthermore, the Employer has yet to provide us with the STD Plan Summary or all the specifics on their employee-paid parking proposal, stating this is per Providence Regional. I guess it will be what it will be? Not for Union employees. We need to know exactly what the impact to our Members will be so we can make counter proposals to mitigate the impact as best as possible.

Next Steps:

Since Regional is running the takeaway proposals and your HEALTH Benefits and Pension Benefits and locally Leadership at each Providence facility states they can't make changes to those benefits, the Providence Union Coalition (PUC) has organized an action for Friday July 26, 2019 at 12:30pm at the Providence Renton Headquarters. The Providence Headquarters office is located at 1801 Lind Ave SW, Renton, WA 98057. Please join us and show your demand for a FAIR Contract and competitive health and pension benefits. Please encourage other coworkers, friends and family to attend this rally. Those able to drive down are encouraged to carpool with other members or let your union staff know if you can take others with you to this important rally.

RSVP by Friday, July 19th to your union staff: Mary Maloy marym@opeiu8.org or Nallely Flores nallely@opeiu8.org

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**OFFICE AND PROFESSIONAL EMPLOYEES INTERNATIONAL UNION LOCAL 8
1-800-600-2433 or 206-441-8880 ★ Fax: 206-441-0207 ★ www.opeiu8.org**

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