

November 10, 2005

OPEN LETTER TO CUPE HEALTH CARE MEMBERS:

Attached you will find a copy of the most recent bargaining communiqué. When you read it you will note that despite SAHO's continued refusal to deal with ANY monetary issues prior to the coalition common table (CUPE, SEIU and SGEU), SAHO announced to the 3 coalition partners at their respective tables on Wednesday, November 9, 2005 that the mandate had been improved. When pressed, they admitted this improvement was their **opening offer and not a final offer**. This offer falls well short of the SUN and HSAS settlements, and does NOT provide resources sufficient to deal with your priorities at the bargaining table. In fact, **SAHO said that the cost of ANY equity improvements would have to come out of this offer**.

SAHO presented this offer now in an effort to thwart the plan of the CUPE-SGEU-SEIU coalition to obtain strike mandates before we reach the common table where we will be bargaining general wage increases, benefits and addressing workplace equity issues such as professional fees, shift and premium pay, vacation accrual and family leave, etc.

This recent offer means that our coalition is working. Your support to date coupled with SEIU's 81% strike mandate and the impending strike votes for CUPE and SGEU have moved the government off 0-1-1. It also brings our goals for workplace equity much, much closer to reality -- **BUT WE CAN'T GO FURTHER WITHOUT YOUR CONTINUED SUPPORT**.

I cannot over emphasize the importance of achieving a strong strike mandate from CUPE members next week. The spectre of strike mandates from the 3 health provider unions (over 25,000 health care workers) united at one common table should be enough to move this employer and this government to address our equity issues. We are so close and this is a historic moment to make real progress. **Do not let this opportunity pass!**

Your bargaining committee is working very hard on your behalf. Please support them in the fight for your priorities by voting in favour of strike support. **A strong strike mandate will allow us to continue to negotiate on your behalf!** Circulate this letter widely to your co-workers and encourage them to vote yes as well.

In Solidarity,

Gordon Campbell

Gordon Campbell,
President, CUPE Health Care Council

Attach.
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November 9, 2005

BARGAINING COMMUNIQUE #21

The bargaining committee met with SAHO and the employers in Regina on November 7th, 8th, and 9th, 2005.

On the second day SAHO tabled a monetary proposal package of 2-2-2 plus an additional 1% funding for our Extended Health and Enhanced Dental Plans. When pressed, SAHO admitted this is not a final offer. Although this offer is an improvement on their initial 0-1-1 it is still woefully inadequate to meet the needs of our members, particularly with all the common table equity issues outstanding. The new proposal still falls well below the settlements achieved by SUN and HSAS and other public sector unions.

We were also told that any additional monetary improvements related to equity or other issues will have to be deducted from the above monetary offer. **THIS IS NOT ACCEPTABLE!**

SAHO simultaneously delivered this same monetary package to our coalition partners at the SEIU and SGEU tables. After discussion with our partners we remain confident in the strength of our coalition and both SGEU and CUPE will be proceeding with our strike votes.

The coalition works! The 81% SEIU strike vote and the threat of the upcoming strike votes of CUPE and SGEU members have caused the government and SAHO to improve their initial monetary offer.

We have the strength of our coalition with SEIU and SGEU – together we are over 25,000 strong. United as we are and with strong strike mandates we will be in the best position for success at the common bargaining table. All three Unions **must** have a strong strike mandate before we get there. It is critical that you give your bargaining committee the support they need to achieve the fairness you deserve.

We continue to negotiate non-monetary priority issues such as workload, a harassment-free workplace, etc. To achieve an agreement on equity issues such as vacation entitlements, family leave, standby, weekend/premium pay, professional fee reimbursement, and protection against privatization and contracting out we need your support!

Vote “YES” on strike vote day!

Our next bargaining dates are November 22nd, 23rd and 24th, 2005 in Saskatoon.