

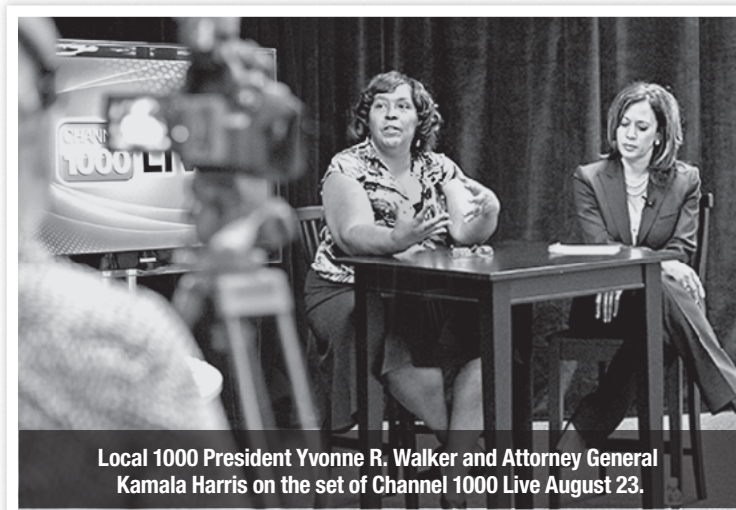
AUGUST 31, 2011

UNION UPDATE



President Walker, AG Harris hold town hall on budget cuts

State Attorney General Kamala Harris joined Local 1000 President Yvonne R. Walker to discuss budget cuts at the Department of Justice (DOJ) and the impact on our members last week. The half-hour town hall was broadcast live on Channel 1000, and is now available online for viewing.



Local 1000 President Yvonne R. Walker and Attorney General Kamala Harris on the set of Channel 1000 Live August 23.

DOJ is facing \$71 million in budget cuts over the next two years. Harris pledged to work closely with Local 1000 to minimize the impact felt by members, while Walker detailed contract protections and the rights of state workers whose jobs may be impacted.

You can watch an encore presentation online at seiu1000.org—also online: a series of frequently asked questions regarding the layoff process.

DMH workers say: 'Safety first'

Members call for increased security in hospitals

Local 1000 members are asking the Legislature to do something that the Department of Mental Health (DMH) has so far refused to do—protect the safety of workers at state mental hospitals.

“Our lives are in danger every day when we go to work,” said Christina Villarreal, a nurse at Patton State Hospital in Riverside County, who was part of a panel that testified at the request of the Assembly Select Committee on State Hospital Safety on Aug. 23. “We don’t know who will be assaulted next.”

The committee convened the hearing in order to find ways to increase safety during challenging budget times. Local 1000, as part

of an ongoing safety campaign with other unions, has proposed increased security measures in the state’s psychiatric hospitals, including more guards, a better alarm system and increased restrictions on the mobility of violence-prone patients.

More than 90 percent of the patients in state mental hospitals were arrested for felony crimes and then transferred out of the criminal justice system. Mental hospitals have less stringent security policy than prisons—and fewer protections for staff and patients.

Although Local 1000 and other employee unions have been fighting for a safer workplace for years, the issue began to gain momentum after psychiatric technician Donna Gross was murdered by a patient last October at Napa State Hospital. Villarreal and employees



“We need more security officers and better support from management. We need to be safe in order to do our jobs.”

—Christina Villarreal
Nurse, Patton State Hospital

from other DMH hospitals testified about serious attacks in which violent patients injured health care employees and other patients.

“We have many patients who have a prison mentality that makes it dangerous for staff and patients,” Villarreal said. “We need more security officers and better support from management. We need to be safe in order to do our jobs.”

UNION HISTORY

Labor Day honors the contribution of working people

Commonly enjoyed as an end of summer celebration—picnics, barbecues, parades and a long holiday weekend—Labor Day is actually a direct result of organized labor’s political clout.

Labor Day, as we know it, is the direct result of a political compromise by President Grover Cleveland. It’s roots reach back to the tumultuous 1880s when the Industrial Revolution was in full bloom and organized labor first flexed its muscle on a national level in support of the eight-hour workday, child labor laws and a holiday to honor working people.

The first Labor Day was a local event celebrated in New York City on Tuesday, Sept. 5, 1882,

when more than 10,000 workers took unpaid time off to march from City Hall to Union Square. Most American labor groups were following the lead of European labor unions, who had successfully pushed for a May 1 Labor Day.

National political leaders were first realizing the strength of the national labor movement. But early May was also associated with the bloody Haymarket incident in Chicago where a lethal bomb went off during a peaceful

labor march on May 4, 1886. State and local leaders feared a Labor Day in May would be too controversial so they passed laws creating a September holiday as a compromise. By 1894, 23 states celebrated some form of Labor Day.

President Cleveland was eager to curry favor with unions after 250,000 railroad workers in 27 states walked off the job in 1894 during the Pullman Strike. So six days after the strike ended, he pushed legislation through Congress on June 28, 1894 creating the first Labor Day.

For a list of Labor Day events visit seiu1000.org

Resource Center

Monday-Friday
7 a.m. to 7 p.m.
866.471.SEIU (7348)

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Rallying cry across the country: “Jobs, not cuts!”

Members target politicians during Congressional recess

Local 1000 members all over California are telling members of Congress to focus on middle class jobs—not cuts that hurt our families—when lawmakers return to Washington, D.C. after their summer recess.

“Our members are talking directly to their representatives, asking ‘Where are the jobs?’ and calling on them to support working families,” Local 1000 President Yvonne R. Walker said.

Local 1000 members have attended meetings and town hall events and staged rallies at the local offices of members of Congress. We have also sent more than 500 emails to lawmakers and made numerous phone calls to their California offices.

Nationally, SEIU members have joined with jobless Americans, workers, students and other citizens over the August recess to demand that politicians create the decent jobs we need to put the economy on track.



SEIU members lobbying Stockton’s congressional representative Jerry McNerney in his Washington, D.C. office.

Tereatha Henderson, an Employment Development Department employee in Rancho Cordova, plans to join other Local 1000 members for a rally tomorrow (Sept. 1) at her congressman’s district office in Granite Bay, near Roseville.

“Basically we’re trying to get congress to pay attention to working class families in his district and support legislation that increases jobs instead of bills that hurt the economy,” Henderson said. “He needs to stop supporting wealthy corporations at the expense of working families in his district.”