

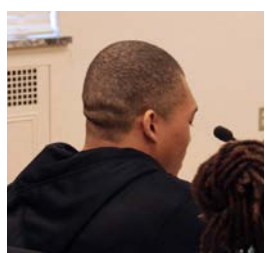
Our 2015 Legislative Agenda

Hope is what gives us the energy to act.

And action helps turn hope into reality.

As members of UFCW 21, we can and do make things better every day. For our co-workers, our families and for the people we serve at work, it is important that we demand respect for each other as human beings. All people should have a fair wage, have quality affordable health care, to be able to take a paid day off when sick and retire with dignity after a lifetime of work. We should all be able to support ourselves and our families when we work hard and play by the rules. But far too often, this American Dream is out of our reach. UFCW 21 is building a movement to change this so the American Dream can be a reality for all people.

We take action to win fair contracts and we take action to enforce those contracts. Yet many battles we need to win cannot be fought contract by contract, workplace by workplace. For these challenges, we need to improve and enforce the laws of the land.



“Everyone is better off when workers have paid sick days and a higher minimum wage,” said Demetrius Bolden (Federal Way Safeway) when he testified for the first time ever at a January hearing in Olympia. He was

nervous, but he did it. Misty Moulin, a Providence Everett Nurse, spoke at another hearing in February on the issue of improving staffing for nurses at hospitals so we can take better care of our patients.

Other proposals we are supporting this legislative session include closing the Walmart Loophole so big corporations can't dump their workers onto state health care, shirking their corporation's responsibility. We're working to improve voting rights so that every voter has an equal opportunity to participate in our democracy. And we are pushing for protections for health care workers so that they can take breaks and not be forced to work overtime.

Our legislative work is made possible by members. Unlike large corporations that use millions of dollars to lobby lawmakers, our political and legislative work is supported by our Active Ballot Club – where members choose to give a few dollars a month. Added together, these thousands of members make a difference by funding the work. Members make a difference by phone banking and meeting with lawmakers face-to-face. A few years ago, Paid Sick Leave and a higher minimum wage were only talked about by small groups of activists and in our newsletter. Now they are front page news, in the President's State of the Union Address and being passed in cities and states across the nation. We need to keep up the pressure, keep organized and stay hopeful. When we win, it will not only benefit us as members of UFCW 21, but all our families and the people we serve every day at our jobs.



“Everyone is better off when workers have paid sick days and a higher minimum wage.”

Members Stand Up for Their Rights...

Macy's Workers Win Wage Progression

When **Macy's** workers who had previously earned commission were converted to straight hourly wages without commission, their wage scale boosted immediately, in many cases by several dollars per hour. However, Macy's then tried to freeze workers at their new wage rates until they had worked hundreds, if not thousands, of hours before they could earn another raise. This was a clear violation of our union contract. Within days of our arbitration to resolve this grievance, **Macy's agreed to give those workers the raises they earned over those hundreds and thousands of hours with back pay.** Pay checks on January 16 reflected this win.



short- staffing a shift and result in more hours being cut. When everyone takes their breaks our bodies get rest, we perform better at our work, and we force our employers to properly staff our shift. **Working through a break is just like wage theft and it adds up to millions of lost dollars for workers each year.**

Take a Break Day at Safeway

In December 2014, workers at **Safeway** stores across our region took over 400 breaks as part of a “Take Your Break Today” action. Short staffing can cause many workers to feel strapped for time so they work through their break. Doing this can actually encourage an employer



Central Co-op Leads Nation on Progressive Wages

In January **Central Co-op**, a small local independent natural grocer in Seattle, signed our new contract. The new agreement was celebrated as a national leader on wages and other benefits. As far as wages, all workers got a raise and the entry level wage after a 60-day trial period is now \$15 an hour. **This is over three years ahead of the requirements in Seattle's new minimum wage law and the highest rates for entry level grocery workers in the nation.** Michael McGovern (left), a UFCW 21 member at the Co-op, joined the press conference as the new contract was signed.



Ramona Howe is a CAT leader from the Covington MultiCare Clinic and spearheaded the effort to run a petition to keep 24/7 security guards at her clinic.

Protecting Security Guards at MultiCare

When it appeared that **MultiCare** was going to cut more non-union Security Guards at the Covington Clinic, members took action. After they drafted up a petition and OK'd it through their union Rep, they got each of their co-workers to sign it and demanded a safe workplace and proper security. In January, MultiCare sent a communication to all Covington members notifying them of the reinstated security for 24/7 coverage. **By recognizing a problem, and then taking thoughtful and collective action, health care workers were able to do right for all workers and their patients.** MultiCare also expanded the security coverage to address issues at other locations.

Creative Action Saves Jobs

When **Group Health Cooperative** proposed changes at their Tacoma Specialty Center that would have resulted job losses, **Christine Fletcher** took action. As one of the Stenographers there, she and her co-workers came up with a creative solution that met the employer's needs and saved jobs. **She presented the idea to Group Health and they agreed to try out the solution at least for the next year, allowing everyone to keep their job.**

Concerns Raised About Non-Profit Hospitals' Debt Collection

Across the nation, some non-profit hospitals have used aggressive billing and debt collection to make huge profits while driving patients into economic ruin. Late in 2014, a series of stories by ProPublica and NPR ran with headlines like "When Nonprofit Hospitals Sue Their Poorest Patients" and "How Nonprofit Hospitals Are Seizing Patients' Wages." The New York Times ran a story in early 2015 that quoted a top official for the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau, saying "Since September 2013, debt collection has been the top complaint at the consumer bureau. Among all debt types, medical debt tops the list."



Locally, The Tacoma News Tribune ran stories about MultiCare, Pierce County's largest private sector employer, and how they went after insurance settlement money of some patients who had been in accidents instead of billing Medicaid or health insurance. The hospital, which is a non-profit, generated \$241 million in profit in 2012 and \$288 in 2013 – a huge 15.7% profit margin.

Making Some Change — More Change Needed

Pressure from the media, consumer advocates and some members of Congress has led to new rules being adopted by the federal government that will go into effect next year. These rules require 120 days for patients to decide whether they want to apply for financial assistance and then another 120 days to complete their application process. They also forbid non-profit hospitals from aggressive collection tactics for the first 120 days, including: reporting a patient's delinquent debt to a credit bureau; selling a patient's debt to a third party; placing a lien on a patient's property; and garnishing a patient's wages. These are all good reforms and will require the vigilance of patients and others to make sure that they are followed.

Unfortunately, an issue not addressed by the reforms is that non-profit hospitals will continue to be allowed to go after insurance settlements from accidents. And they will be allowed to continue to charge high interest rates – in Washington up to 12%. Because the charges can amount to many thousands of dollars and the interest is so high, many people are shackled with debt for their entire lives.

By standing up against aggressive debt collection by non-profit hospitals – particularly those making millions in profit each year, we can generate more needed reforms. We can make change working in political, legal, media and other tactical ways. An example: after a lawsuit, a change in federal rules, exposure in local media and other pressure, including our current negotiations and recent leaflet action, MultiCare changed its charity care policy and will be promoting that potential support to patients.



Providence United – 5,000 Strong and Growing

By standing together, over 5,000 Providence employees across the state who are UFCW 21 members can win better contracts that give us a voice in the workplace for ourselves and our patients. Providence Everett workers joined together and presented a giant petition signed by most of their co-workers to Management. This sign of unity was a big step and was followed by very successful leafleting actions in February.

UFCW 21 COMMUNITY PARTNERS PROFILE

The Statewide Poverty Action Network mobilizes across Washington and in the capital to make sure everyone has the opportunity to prosper. Poverty Action is working this legislative session on issues such as increased social service funding, improved voter rights, and progressive tax reform needed by many of our members, families and others in our community. By partnering with important groups like Poverty Action we can advance the lives of everyone in our great state. Check out more on our website at ufcw21.org/about/our-community-partnerships.



On the front cover:

Demetrius "D" Bolden, a Night Shift Checker at Safeway #1555 in Federal Way, went to Olympia in January to take action and speak up at a hearing for Paid Sick Days and a Higher Minimum Wage.

UFCW 21 is the state's largest private sector union – with over 44,000 members working in grocery stores and retail, health care, meat processing, and other industry jobs. UFCW21.org



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UFCW 21 Meat Apprenticeship Program

All Apprenticeship Meat Cutters in King County need to be enrolled in class to cut meat in the County. It is a two year course at South Seattle Community College, Georgetown Campus. The Seattle Meat Cutters Apprenticeship Program is a partnership between UFCW 21 and the employer. At the completion of the course the Apprentice will be certified by the State of Washington as a Journey Meat Cutter. Call 206-436-0210 to ask for assistance if interested.



There are many free tax preparation services available. For a quick way to find a location and time of operation near you, go to:

<http://irs.treasury.gov/freetaxprep/>

Free Tax Preparation

Are you one of the over 6,000 people who like the UFCW 21 Facebook page? If not, and you'd like to keep updated on interesting news and activities, go to Facebook: UFCW 21.



FACEBOOK