



ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON LABOR AND EMPLOYMENT
ROGER HERNÁNDEZ, CHAIR
ASSEMBLYMEMBER, FORTY-EIGHTH DISTRICT

October 6, 2015

Ms. Deborah Proctor
President & CEO
St. Joseph's Health System
3345 Michelson Drive, Suite 100
Irvine, CA 92612

Dear Ms. Proctor:

I am aware the nurses of St. Joseph's Health System (SJH) are actively organizing on multiple campuses with the California Nurses Association (CNA) to represent their interests in collective bargaining. This letter is to express my sincere hope that SJH management will respect the right of Registered Nurses (RNs) to decide on union representation in an environment that is free of any kind of pressure, intimidation or deception. Whatever the administration's views on the issue, it is a matter that should appropriately be left to the nurses freely to make.

I am also aware that the National Labor Relations Board has issued a myriad of unfair labor practice complaints against SJH for allegedly violating nurses' rights, including but not limited to, being prohibited to visit their workplace to share information with colleagues, and for censoring ribbons that read, "St. Joseph's RNs for Safe Patient Care."

I have also reviewed CNA's report, "Falling from Grace: St. Joseph's Health RNs Raise Ethical and Patient Care Concerns." As an elected official and someone who supports SJH—I want to express my concerns about what is set forth in this report. In particular, I am concerned about reports that SJH and its hospitals have:

- Launched an illegal system-wide campaign to restrict RNs from organizing a union to advocate for improved treatment of patients and RNs—resulting in being charged with scores of violations of federal law due to these unfair labor practices, in the past year.
- Cut patient services, under-staffed its hospitals and under-stocked necessary supplies, while recording over \$500 million in profits in the last two years alone—and paying exorbitant executive salaries.

As an advocate of quality healthcare, I view RNs as having a direct impact on the quality of healthcare. I strongly believe that when the collective voices of RNs are respected, quality of care improves.


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It is critically important to our community that health care facilities foster a nurturing workplace environment while addressing the need for highly skilled professionals. Affording nurses in the St. Joseph's system the right independently to determine their future with CNA will facilitate the mutual goal of attracting and retaining these qualified health professionals.

The California Nurses Association, the largest nurse union in the state, is an organization that is widely recognized for its leadership in healthcare. Major Catholic hospitals in California have entered into agreements with CNA that have resulted in good labor relations between management, CNA and its members.

Thank you in advance for your consideration and for your leadership on this pressing issue.

Sincerely,



ROGER HERNÁNDEZ, Chair
Assembly Committee on Labor and Employment