



**TONI G. ATKINS**  
SPEAKER OF THE ASSEMBLY

September 30, 2015

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

Dear Ms. Proctor:

It is my understanding that the nurses of St. Joseph's Health (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 provide a fair and neutral setting for Registered Nurses (RNs) to decide on union representation.

It has also been brought to my attention that there are allegations of Unfair Labor Practice complaints against SJH before the National Labor Relations Board. These complaints, along with staffing shortfall issues, were highlighted in a recent report conducted by CNA titled "Falling from Grace: St. Joseph Health RNs Raise Ethical and Patient Care Concerns."

As a former health clinic administrator myself and someone who has a few RNs as well as medical doctors in my family, 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. I have worked with the CNA throughout my career as an elected official and they are widely respected for their leadership in healthcare. In fact, they've worked with me in past legislation that I authored to make one my bills stronger regarding quality assurance. A number of other Catholic hospitals in California have entered into collective bargaining agreements with the CNA that have resulted in good labor relations between management and members of the union.

I strongly urge St. Joseph Health to respect neutrality during the organizing campaign and to refrain from distributing materials disparaging the CNA, intimidating RNs through anti-union meetings, surveillance of union activities, and discouraging RNs from meeting with the union. It is quite disheartening to learn that workers are put in this environment.

California has a long history of respect for the right of workers to choose to join a union. It is my personal belief that when workers are afforded the opportunity to exercise this right in a neutral setting, they are able to make the choice that is best for them and their families. Thank you for considering this request and for your leadership on this issue. Please do not hesitate to contact me at my office if you have any questions.

Warmly,



TONI G. ATKINS  
Speaker of the Assembly  
78th Assembly District

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