We met with management today to continue negotiations and to address their exclusion of ONA nurses from recognition of MLK Day (see our update below). Thanks to everyone who took a few moments to drop by or covered for folks so that they could drop by.

By and large, we were disappointed to receive only five counterproposals from management. We gave them our first three proposals on October 27th, five more on November 10th, and 16 more, including wages, on December 13th. It's been five weeks since our last meeting, and they have yet to propose wages or counter our major priorities. The time we spent preparing these proposals has been our own time, while Providence management is responsible for doing this as part of their regular job duties. Management provided us counters on Equality of Employment Opportunity, Workplace Safety, Holidays, Restrooms & Lockers, and Grievance Procedure. Management also agreed to limited parts of our proposal on Health and Safety, and they did include MLK Day as a holiday, beginning next year. We will have those proposals posted on our website later this week.

Our union introduced three additional proposals today, rounding out our proposal set.

- **Article 24 – Low Census**
- **LOA – RN Care Managers**
- **LOA – Retention Scheduling Program**

It's now crystal clear. If we're going to get our priorities addressed in this round of bargaining, it will be because nurses demonstrate broad support for our proposals and show Providence that we're willing to do what's necessary to win a good contract. **Please join us this Friday, January 20, at the Providence Office Park (4400 NE Halsey St) from 4:30 – 5:30 p.m. to rally and demand that Providence settle a fair contract and take immediate steps to support caregivers.** Friends, family, children, and well-behaved pets are all welcome. You can register through the [ONA website](https://ona.org).
**Martin Luther King Jr. Holiday Update**

We were informed late in the afternoon on Friday, through messages forwarded by our membership, that PPMC had made the decision not to offer Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Day to ONA-represented nurses as a holiday in 2023. We understood that Providence had made the decision in 2022 to honor Dr. King because “it was the right thing to do,” and we didn’t understand PPMC’s decision to be strictly one-time nor conditional. Indeed, as many of you know, Providence has extended MLK Day to other non-union employees, and to other ONA bargaining units that have added MLK Day as a holiday through their own struggles at the bargaining table. In 2018/2019, ONA PPMC Leadership proposed making MLK Day a holiday and a feature of our contract, but Providence rejected that proposal, along with many others.

We like to think that Dr. King, were he here today, would be supporting nurses up against a grotesque and obscene healthcare system that routinely puts profits over people. In his final days, Dr. King was in Memphis, Tennessee supporting striking sanitation workers as they fought for higher wages, a safer working environment, and basic human dignity. (For those interested, the film “At the River I Stand” offers a powerful depiction of the Memphis sanitation workers strike and Dr. King’s last days. [It can be watched on YouTube](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pTPJ6Kf21ac) or [rented on Vimeo](https://vimeo.com/10777851)).

We spoke with PPMC management today at bargaining, and we asked them why MLK Day wasn’t being recognized for PPMC ONA RNs, and they said that last year was a “one-off”, and it’s not in our contract. We asked them for mutual agreement to include PPMC RNs for MLK Day pay and to get this resolved by the end of the pay period. They responded that they will “take our request into consideration”, and they expect to have a response to us by our next bargaining session, and as soon as later this week. We’ll keep you posted.

Ironically, and as we mentioned before, PPMC did include MLK Day in their counter-proposal on holidays they gave us this afternoon, although they made it clear that they intend it to be effective starting next year, for what that’s worth.

Meanwhile, Providence has committed several grievances and unfair labor practices (ULPs – violations of federal labor law) related to their holiday administration in the last month, including unilateral changes to department operating hours, mandatory department closures, and requiring employees to use their own PTO or take their normal working hours unpaid. Our union intends to pursue these complaints in the appropriate forums, and we’ll keep you informed. If you have evidence of Providence changing holiday practices in your department, please contact Seth Moore at 503-841-1787 if you haven’t already done so.