Indifference. That’s the sentiment of Providence executives this week, as the pandemic rages across Providence hospitals. Despite news recently that OHSU and Kaiser Permanente both signed agreements to extend crucial and potentially lifesaving benefits to nurses, Providence is still refusing to honor our Bill of Rights by signing an enforceable agreement over COVID-19 protections.

After Providence executives refused to agree to sick time for vaccinations at the bargaining table last week – among other crucial protections – bargaining unit chairs from across the state were appalled to see the employer’s efforts this week to bypass ONA elected bargaining unit leadership and unilaterally implement a piecemeal approach to staff and patient safety. These are benefits which Providence can rescind, reduce, or modify at any time, regardless of the needs of ONA nurses during the pandemic.

In response, the ONA Providence Bargaining Unit Chairs met this week to authorize a highly visible Portland-area car caravan of ONA nurses and supporters, to protest management’s disregard for ONA members who are heroically going to work every day providing care during the pandemic. Providence does not want the word to get out about their treatment of nurses and other health care workers, but we have the power to tell our story to a public which stands with health care workers.

Mark your calendar for the car caravan on Saturday, Jan. 9 and anticipate more details to follow.

Click here to commit to attending this critical action.

It is clear that Providence would not even be extending their recently announced provision of COVID benefits without your collective action as ONA members – but with over $12 billion in cash reserves, there is no justification for their behavior toward ONA nurses.
Management’s attitude betrays the mission of the organization and places staff and patients at risk. We continue to push Providence to agree to a COVID-19 MOU that will bring them up to the community standard, which includes:

- 80 hours emergency pay for ill caregivers
- Widespread testing to account for asymptomatic carriers
- Childcare
- Consistent exposure and notification procedures
- Other critical needs

In Solidarity,
ONA Providence Bargaining Unit Chairs

P.S. Read ONA’s legal response here.