Today our coworkers at the PeaceHealth Nurse Midwifery Birth Center (NMBC) and Lane County Prenatal Clinic presented a letter outlining their intent to join our union. This letter was presented to Janelle Gilge, PeaceHealth Medical Group (PHMG) Operations Director of Specialty Care. Janelle received our letter and said she will take it to Human Resources. The 17 nurses and nurse midwives included in the group decided to organize after recognizing a need for safe staffing, a voice and transparency in decision-making, and due process. These are the same reasons why so many of us remain committed to being active members of ONA: fair treatment and the ability to join with our coworkers to be advocates of safe patient care.

The NMBC has been a beloved institution in the community for over 30 years. The move to their current location—which is less than a mile away from RiverBend—happened in 2010 after our community rallied behind the NMBC by fundraising over $750,000 to support the cost of rebuilding the birth center. The nurses and nurse midwives provide maternal health services, including well-woman, prenatal, intrapartum, and postpartum care to pregnant women and infants at the Birth Center, RiverBend, and Lane County Prenatal Clinic. They attend to more than 400 births a year and play a critical role in keeping our community healthy.

Over the last six years, many of our coworkers have formed unions at PeaceHealth. Nurse care managers were the most recent group to unionize with ONA at Sacred Heart. They just completed their negotiations and had a unanimous vote on the terms for them to enter the collective bargaining agreement between ONA and Sacred Heart.

With assistance from ONA, a petition was filed for an election with the National Labor Relations Board, which is the government agency that oversees union elections. A vote will be scheduled in the next few weeks. Please join us in supporting our nurse and nurse midwife colleagues in their effort to become part of ONA!
Declaration

We, the undersigned nurses and nurse midwives of PeaceHealth Nurse Midwifery Birth Center (and Lane County Prenatal Clinic), are committed to addressing recent changes that have negatively impacted the quality of care we provide to our patients as well as our working conditions.

Our jobs are changing in alarming ways. There is an increased expectation to work short staffed. More and more we are assigned additional tasks that are not always RN and CNM duties and that take our time away from mothers and newborns. These factors hurt our department’s ability to recruit and retain qualified staff.

Our highest priorities are:

- Providing excellent patient care to women and newborns at the hospital, the birth center and in our community.
- Collaborating to develop systems, policies, and programs that ensure we have input into decisions affecting the delivery of care.
- Ensuring that all nurses and nurse midwives are treated fairly and have access to due process and job protection.

As a necessary step for RNs and CNMs at PeaceHealth Nurse Midwifery Birth Center (and Lane County Prenatal Clinic) to accomplish our priorities, we must join our 1300 ONA-represented colleagues at Sacred Heart Medical Center which have a contract that establishes a voice for nurses at the hospital. Over the last few years, we have seen many decisions and actions at the birth center and prenatal clinic that run contrary to PeaceHealth’s core values of respect, stewardship, collaboration, and social justice. These are values which we seek to uphold through unionizing. As nurses and nurse midwives united together, we commit to continue to support the hospital in achieving the highest standards of health care at PeaceHealth for our community.

PeaceHealth Midwifery Birth Center Nurses and Nurse Midwives