Local ONA Leader Shares Message of Support with Birth Center Nurses And Nurse Midwives

Oregon Nurses Association (ONA) Board member Billy Lindros shared his support for the organizing effort by birth center nurses and midwives this past Wednesday at our organizing committee meeting. Billy is a long time ONA leader and recently retired from Sacred Heart Home Health & Hospice Services. Over the years he helped represent nurses during investigatory meetings as a steward, bargained contracts as a member of the executive team. Billy currently volunteers locally to orient new nurses to their position at SHMC. He has seen a lot. He shared at the meeting that he is seeing numerous new hires from southern states who share that they were earning $15/hour less and had no contractual protections. Here’s what Billy had to say about why ONA supports this effort:

“The birth center is very important to me. The birth of both my grown children were attended by midwives. The nurses and nurse midwives from the birth center provide an invaluable service to our community. They deserve due process and need to have a voice in the decisions that affect the way care is provided to the newest members of our community. The best way to do that is to make sure they are protected by the ONA contract that benefits over 1300 nurse colleagues at Riverbend and University District. We will support them in any way we can to win them a seat at the table with us.”
The Oregon Nurses Association (ONA) invites you to attend ONA’s Convention and House of Delegates in beautiful Bend, OR, April 18-20, 2018. Join nurses from across the state to learn from national and state leaders, decide ONA’s official positions, and determine your organization’s future.

ONA’s 2018 Convention is a three-day event featuring nationally recognized speakers, workshops, panels, discussions, and continuing education. This year’s event will be centered around how nurses can effectively advocate for patients and colleagues in the workplace and in the community.

Visit [www.OregonRN.org/event/2018Convention](http://www.OregonRN.org/event/2018Convention) to register for the Convention and select your sessions. Workshop space is limited, so register today!

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**PeaceHealth Continues to Fight Nurses and Nurse Midwives’ Right to Join ONA**

Yesterday the National Labor Relations Board began the hearing on the appropriateness of the PeaceHealth Nurse Midwifery Birth Center (NMBC) voting to join their ONA colleagues’ contract.

With the RN Care Managers and Utilization Review nurses that organized last year, management did not contest the vote and nurses proceeded forward to a successful election without delay.

It’s a different story now. PeaceHealth contested and delayed the right of nurses and nurse midwives to vote in an election to join ONA. PeaceHealth argues that we shouldn’t be allowed to vote to join because the birth center under PH Medical Group is supposedly a separate employer. Richard Bennet, VP of Operations for PHMG testified that NMBC nurses have a different skill set. Bennet contests that because we work in a less stressful environment and perform a different job entirely than nurses at Riverbend, we don’t have a sufficient “community of interest” with ONA nurses.

- No matter that most of the birth center’s operations are centralized with Riverbend.
- No matter that nurse midwives spend at least half our shifts working at Riverbend.
- No matter that nurses provide the same type of care whether we are working at L&D or the birth center.

NMBC nurses are not accepting their arguments. The hearing will continue today and we will keep you posted.

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**Birth Center Leaders Step Up to the Challenge**

Thank you to Krystle Rodriguez, Alyssa Wagner and Annie Snyder who traveled to the National Labor Relations Board office in Portland to testify at the hearing about our common working conditions with ONA members and about the operations of the birth center. They are standing up for birth center colleagues to say we belong with our ONA comrades.