

Endorsing the Plan of the Committee on Representational Excellence

Resolution 04-11

Whereas, in April 2011, the SEIU-UHW Executive Board adopted a Plan to Win the Future, which included a commitment to “Create a Union Wide Program of Representational Excellence” that maximizes the leadership of rank-and-file leaders in the representation process, expands and improves support for representational leaders, improves communication with members, focuses the representational resources of the union on issues we can be proud of, dramatically shortens the time-frame for resolution of grievances and utilizes technology to create a 21st Century system; and

Whereas, achieving Representational Excellence allows SEIU-UHW to expand and develop leadership opportunities for rank-and-file leaders in the union as part of our program to create 10,000 leaders; and

Whereas, achieving Representational Excellence creates the credibility with our membership that allows us to focus resources on growing SEIU to be a one million-member organization in California and positions SEIU-UHW as a premier healthcare organization working for a more effective, higher quality and more accessible healthcare delivery system; and

Whereas, a volunteer committee of rank-and-file leaders and union staff have been meeting for five months and have reviewed the current representation systems in the local, met with other locals who have innovated around representation and met with employers to explore what is possible; and

Whereas the Representational Excellence Committee has developed a plan to achieve the goals set forth in the Executive Board’s Plan to Win resolution:

Therefore, be it resolved that the Executive Board of SEIU-UHW endorses the plan of the Representational Excellence Committee which calls for:

- Creating an online tool that protects employee’s confidentiality for representational leaders that includes a local-wide grievance log with an automated system of reminders, an arbitration library and other resources for representational leaders to access;
- Focusing on training stewards and employers to resolve issues informally wherever possible;
- Working in contract negotiations to achieve streamlined grievance procedures that resolve grievances within 90 days, utilizing pre-scheduled expedited arbitration;
- Implementing a Worker-Steward Agreement process that clarifies expectations and gives members a role in furthering their representation;

- Providing regular status updates to members and timely responses to their questions;
- Creating a non-political process of determining which grievances go to arbitration based on a standard of “are we likely to prevail” that gives members the opportunity to appeal the decision to an independent, trained rank-and-file panel;
- Significantly expanding the number of functioning representational leaders in the union who focus primarily on representation;
- Clarifying the role of rank-and-file representation leaders and union staff organizers, putting rank-and-file representation leaders at the center of the union’s representation work;
- Revamping the training program of representational leaders in the union to provide for 1-2 hour training modules on key topics that can be done in the worksites;
- Creating a unionwide mentorship program for new stewards; and

Be it further resolved that the Representational Excellence Committee will be empowered to review the progress of this plan, make adjustments where needed and provide regular reports to the Executive Board.