

TO: All Legislators

FROM: Senator Melissa Agard and Representative Lisa Subeck

DATE: May 20, 2021

RE: Co-sponsorship of LRB 2149/1, relating to: collective bargaining for employees of the University of Wisconsin Hospitals and Clinics Authority, the “*Union Voice for Quality Care at UW Health Act*”

DEADLINE: Thursday, June 3rd at 4:00pm

Wisconsin has a long-standing tradition of promoting fundamental workplace rights including workers compensation, safety regulations, collective bargaining rights, and hour restrictions. Many of these were so successful, they were taken up nationally. However, Act 10 stripped away collective bargaining rights over hours, conditions of employment, and wages (except up to CPI) for public employee unions, including for the employees of the University of Wisconsin Hospitals and Clinics (UWHCA).

Our nurses and health care workers have been there for us during a once in a century pandemic. It’s time that we, as a state, are there for them. This bill would restore the right of UWHCA employees to collectively bargain over those worker rights taken away under the anti-union Act 10. The nurses at UWHCA for decades have provided outstanding direct patient care. The rights this bill restores are essential to re-establish an environment in which nurses are able to function as comprehensive patient advocates and trusted leaders of our health care delivery teams. It provides our health care heroes with a true seat at the table and a voice that is respected and protected.

To be added as a co-sponsor of this legislation, please reply to this email or contact Senator Agard’s office at 6-9170 or Rep. Subeck’s office at 6-7521 by **4:00pm on Thursday, June 3rd**.

Analysis by the Legislative Reference Bureau

This bill allows employees of the University of Wisconsin Hospitals and Clinics Authority to collectively bargain over wages, hours, and conditions of employment. Under current law, employers and employees are prohibited from collective bargaining except as expressly provided in the statutes. Prior to changes made by 2011 Wisconsin Act 10, employees of the UWHCA had the right to collectively bargain over wages, hours, and conditions of employment, and UWHCA was required to bargain over those subjects. The bill restores those rights and also authorizes UWHCA employees to enter into maintenance of membership agreements.

Current right-to-work law prohibits a person from requiring, as a condition of obtaining or continuing employment, an individual to refrain or resign from membership in a labor organization, to become or remain a member of a labor organization, to pay dues or other charges to a labor organization, or to pay any other person an amount that is in place of dues or charges required of members of a labor organization. The bill removes these prohibitions with respect to employees of the UWHCA.

The bill also does the following:

1. Sets conditions under which the UWHCA may enter into an all-union agreement.

2. Provides that, when an all-union agreement between the UWHCA and the representative of a collective bargaining unit is in effect, it is not an unfair labor practice to deduct labor organization dues or assessments from an employee's earnings.

3. Sets conditions for the continuation or termination of all-union agreements, including that, if the Wisconsin Employment Relations Commission determines there is reasonable grounds to believe employees in an all-union agreement have changed their attitude about the agreement, WERC is required to conduct a referendum to determine whether the employees wish to continue the agreement. WERC is required to terminate an all-union agreement if it finds the union unreasonably refused to admit an employee into the union.