

SEIU Healthcare: UW Health nurses to file court appeal of incorrect opinion by Wisconsin Employment Relations Commission

Posted on Thursday, Dec 22, 2022

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Madison, WI- UW Health nurses announced that they will file an appeal today of the recent incorrect opinion by the Wisconsin Employment Relations Commission (WERC) with the Dane County Circuit Court. The wrongly decided WERC opinion claimed that UW Health is not covered under the state Employment Peace Act, meaning that the administration is not legally required to engage in collective bargaining with the nurses' union. However, as the Wisconsin Attorney General and employment law experts have asserted, UW Health clearly meets the definition of "employer" under the Peace Act and is therefore covered. Below is a statement from UW nurses about the filing of the appeal:

"The fight for our union is an extension of our advocacy for quality patient care and good jobs for our community, and we are fiercely determined to win full collective bargaining rights. As part of that effort, we are filing a court appeal of the incorrect Wisconsin Employment Relations Commission opinion. Regardless of WERC's opinion, the groundbreaking agreement that we won in September empowers us with a union voice, and hundreds of us have been signing up to become union members. We are currently meeting as a union with the UW Health administration for the first time in almost a decade through a 'Meet and Discuss' process and have proposed our 'Platform for Quality Care' which includes urgent improvements in staffing, retention and nurse wellness. The legal process does not impact our current union voice at UW Health. We are deeply proud to be at the forefront of a national movement of working people who are organizing across race and industry for an equitable economy and Unions For All."

— UW Health registered nurses CJ Aspenson, Tami Burns, Colin Gillis, Mary Jorgensen, Willie Rowe, Jack Trudell, and Kate Walton