

SEIU Local 517M E-Former – July 2011

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Annual Meeting to be Held on July 22nd

SEIU Local 517M will hold its Annual Meeting on Friday, July 22, 2011 at the Lexington Hotel (formerly Sheraton). Breakfast will start at 8:00 am with the meetings lasting from 9:00am—3:00pm. SEIU International President **Mary Kay Henry**, SEIU Public Services Division Director **Eileen Kirlin**, and SEIU National Political Director **Brandon Davis** are special guests. RSVP your attendance by Friday, July 8th by clicking here: <http://www.seiu517m.org/2011/06/08/seiu-local-517m-annual-meeting/>

Executive Vice President Presents “New Solutions” Report to Governor Snyder



On June 29th SEIU Local 517M Executive Vice President Phil Thompson officially presented our New Solutions for Michigan Report to Governor Rick Snyder at a pre-scheduled meeting in the Governor’s office in Lansing. Among topics discussed were management to staffing ratios (the Governor refers to this issue as “span of control”), contracting out of personal services and the importance of working with front-line staff to solicit ideas for efficiencies in state government.

In addition, copies of our “New Solutions” report are being hand delivered to all members of the Michigan Legislature. Thompson said our Union’s goal was to build “New Solutions into the lexicon for all discussions involving the state budget and contract negotiations.”

HB 4701 and 4702 Attack State Employee Pensions

These bills change the rules for state employees in the Defined Benefit Plan as well as the Defined Contribution Plan. If passed by the Michigan Legislature and signed by the Governor, it would discontinue the infamous 3% required contribution in to retirement “health savings” accounts. The problem is that it increases the contribution to 4% for current members of the Defined Benefit Plan (DB Plan) who choose to remain in that plan—and for those who don’t, it “freezes” their pension benefit at the September, 2011 level. Those state employees would then become members of the Defined Contribution Plan (DC Plan).

In addition, it also changes the rules for current and any new state employees in the Defined Contribution Plan. Employees, who have between 10 and 14 years of service with the state, will have the value of their service somehow “monetized” so that a cash payment can be made upon retirement from state service into a newly-established “Health Retirement Account” (HRA) from which they can pay for future health care costs. HRAs have been around for awhile—primarily in the private sector—and used mostly by employers as a method for reducing their employee health care expenses.

State employees with less than ten years of service but more than 4 years will be treated similarly, except the retirement age for receiving this one-time lump sum “monetized” payment changes to 60 years old.

Finally, state employees with less than four years of service really get hit the hardest—they basically get a one-time lump sum payment of \$2000 at age 65 and retire into an HRA for medical expenses. Find more information and Q and A's at:

<http://www.seiu517m.org/2011/06/08/hb-4701-4702-updates/#comment-317>

A special toll-free number (1-877-851-2521) has been set up which members can call and will be patched through to your legislator's office.

Has President Ruhf Called You Yet?

By now you should have received a call from Local 517M President **Bill Ruhf**, asking you to contact your legislator about House Bills 4701 and 4702. If passed, these two bills will have drastic impact on our State employee member's retirement health care and take home pay. Check out our web site at www.seiu517m.org for more details regarding these bills. If you did not get the call, you can call 1-877-851-2521, a toll free number that will patch you through to your legislator. Tell your legislator to oppose House Bills 4701 and 4702. Do not let our Local President be the only one to make this call. Contact **Steve Reck** at 517-482-1737 if you have any questions.

Analysis of House Bill 4572 Concerning Hard Cap on Health Benefits For Public Employees

This Summary of House Bill 4572 (H-7) as Reported From Committee by the Non-Partisan House Legislative Analysis Section.

House Bill 4572 would create a new law to be known as the Public Employer Health Insurance Cap Act. The new act would go into effect for the 2012 calendar year.

Under the bill, a public employer that offers health insurance to its employees through an insurance carrier, or through self-insurance, would be prohibited from paying more of the annual premium or illustrative annual premium cost (and any payments for reimbursement of co-pays, deductibles, or payments into health savings accounts or similar accounts used for health care, optical, or dental costs) than a total of \$5,000 for single-person coverage, \$10,000 for two-person coverage, or \$15,000 for family coverage. The bill would require the state treasurer to adjust the maximum payment annually based on changes in the medical care component of the United States consumer price index (for the most recent 12-month period for which data were available). More information available at: <http://www.seiu517m.org/2011/06/28/summary-of-house-bill-4572/>

Proposed Bylaw Changes

The SEIU Local 517M Executive Board voted to accept recommendations from the Constitution and Bylaws Committee proposed changes to the SEIU Local 517M Bylaws at their May 23, 2011 meeting. This action allows for member review of the proposed changes before they are voted on by the Executive Board. The proposed changes were posted on the SEIU 517M website.

Click here for more information: <http://www.seiu517m.org/2011/06/17/proposed-bylaw-changes/>

Sign Up For the SEIU Local 517M Golf Outing

The SEIU Local 517M Golf Outing will be held on Thursday, August 4th at Wheatfield Valley Golf Course in Williamston. Registration begins at 8:00 a.m. and the shotgun start is at 9:00 a.m. Cost is \$280 per foursome. Registration deadline is Friday, July 22nd. Click here for more details and the registration form: <http://www.seiu517m.org/2011/04/28/local-517m-golf-outing-2/>

Dearborn Heights School District Members Reach Tentative Agreement

Dearborn Heights School District SEIU Local 517M members reached a tentative agreement on a new two year contract on June 22nd. The members will vote on the proposed agreement soon. It includes some insurance changes, a pay freeze for full-time employees, a pay cut for part-time employees and a new wage scale for new hires after July 1, 2011. Two new holidays were added which the members are excited about. There will be a wage and benefit re-opener in the second year of the agreement.

Human Services Support Unit Meeting in Saginaw

The HSS Division of SEIU 51M held a general membership meeting on Thursday, June 23, 2011 at the Saginaw RICC. The meeting was conducted by President **Phillip Patrick** and Vice President/Grievance Consultant **Denise Edwards**. **Ann Mapes** was the guest speaker. Ann gave an excellent presentation on HB 4701/4702. Read more at: <http://www.seiu517m.org/2011/06/28/hss-saginaw-62311/>

Members Receive Their Member Leadership and Action Pins

At the end of March, 6 members participated in the Member Leadership and Action conference in California. At the end of this conference, all the 1,500 participants were "pinned" as Team Leader Superstars and committed to find, train and pin 3 more leaders each. The following members have been "pinned" under the SEIU Member Leadership and Action program:

William Ruhf, Scientific and Engineering unit
Phillip Patrick, Human Services Support unit
Andy Johnson, City of Saginaw
Joey Combs, Human Services Support unit
Yolanda Langston, City of Detroit
George Heath, Technical unit
Betty Nash, Saginaw ISD Head Start
Azola Williams, City of Saginaw
Jeanette Barnett, Saginaw City Schools
Cephus Porchia, City of Detroit
Melvin McClain, City of Detroit



Members who are “pinned” are recognized as Team Leaders. These leaders take on major responsibility for leading, running, designing some aspect of the one of the FFE campaigns that recruits activists and adds capacity to the local like:



- Chair a committee that recruits many others to these campaign activities.
- Running part of a program – like a neighborhood canvas, a political club in a district.
- Be on a committee that plans and executes actions.
- Running a small organizing drive.
- Training others.
- Develop relationships with other organizations in our campaigns.

(Pictured Above Right: L-R: Betty Nash, Andy Johnson, Azola Williams. Pictured Above Left: Cephus Porchia being pinned by Yolanda Langston.)

Member Tapped for Convention Planning Committee



We are very pleased to announce that **Phillip Patrick**, Human Services Support Unit President, was appointed to the 2012 SEIU International Convention Design Team at the SEIU International Board meeting in Toronto last week. The Design Team is a committee comprised of International Board members, International staff, and Local Union Leadership that will make all the final recommendations for the programs and format for the 2012 International Convention scheduled for May in Denver. “I am looking forward to participating and I am open for any suggestions that any of my fellow 517M leaders may have as we move closer to this important ‘presidential election year’ convention” Patrick said.

We are all very proud that one of our own Local 517M member leaders was selected to serve in this capacity.

Taylor School Unit Vice President Elected

Members in the Taylor Schools Unit have voted **Jeff Michalik** as Unit Vice President. Jeff is moving up the ladder quit fast. He will be leaving the Divisional Vice President position for Divisions A, B, and D that he was just elected to. A new election will be held to replace him at the Divisional Vice President level.

Community Outreach Picnic in Detroit

On Saturday, July 23, 2011 the City of Detroit members and AFRAM will be holding their annual Community Outreach picnic at Belle Isle Park, across from Shelter #5 from 12:00 noon to 6:00 p.m. Come out and enjoy food, games, music, prizes and friends. There will also be a Bid Whiz tournament. Music provided by DJ Dave. Questions can be directed to **Cephus Porchia** at porchia@detroitmi.gov or **Yolanda Langston** at langstony@gmail.com. This event is open to all SEIU Local 517M members and their families.

Remember to Tell the Legislature What You Think!

Remember to visit the Speak Out section of www.seiu517m.org to send letters to your elected officials telling them how their actions are affecting you. The newly redesigned section allows for you to read the sample letter before going into the site to send it to your elected official.

Labor Night with the Lansing Lugnuts

The Lansing Lugnut baseball team is having their annual Labor Night on Saturday, August 20th at Cooley Law School Stadium in Lansing. Watch as the Lugnuts take on the Dayton Dragons at 7:05 p.m. Reserved seats are \$9 each and tickets must be purchased by July 12th. There will be a free player autograph session from 6:15-6:45 p.m. Fireworks follow the game. To reserve your tickets, please contact **Eric Beadle**, Group Sales Representative for the Lansing Lugnuts, at 517-485-4500 ext: 226 or ebeadle@lansinglugnuts.com

Members Only Benefit from Thompson Eyecare

For Members (and qualified family) utilizing participating in the State of Michigan Vision plan: \$50 off any out-of-pocket co-pays (\$25 additional Frame benefit + \$25 Lens upgrades benefit) ...AND...\$29 Contact Lens Fitting Exam (Normally \$55 - \$75 out-of-pocket, not an insurance covered benefit) with purchase of contacts

For Members (and qualified family) **NOT** utilizing benefits (private pay): \$100 off the cost of complete glasses (Frames & Lenses)...AND...\$29 Contact Lens Fitting Exam (Normally \$55 - \$75 out-of-pocket, not an insurance covered benefit) with purchase of contacts

July Special!

Now through July 31st: Members Choice: \$25 Transitions, \$25 Premium Anti-Glare, \$25 polarized Sun-UV blocker, or \$25 Digital Hi-Definition lens upgrades with the purchase of a new frame and lenses.

Thompson Eye Care is located at 2200 Coolidge Rd., Ste. 15, East Lansing (next to the Goodwill Store). Phone is 517-977-1598. www.thompsonec.com