



Legislation Text

File #: 28920, **Version:** 1

Fiscal Note

No appropriation required.

Title

Supporting Worker's Rights at the UW Hospitals and Clinics for the Good of the City.

Body

WHEREAS, due to the efforts of its nurses, physical therapists, technicians, and healthcare professionals, UW Hospital and Clinics (UWHC) is a recognized national leader in cancer treatment, pediatrics, ophthalmology, surgical specialties, and organ transplants; and,

WHEREAS, over 2,300 city of Madison residents are covered under collective bargaining agreements at UWHC, agreements successfully negotiated for over 30 years and resulting in the high quality of care seen performed by the committed workforce of UWHC; and,

WHEREAS, contracts agreed to through collective bargaining have ensured that employees are free to report problems, raise concerns, and question potentially unsafe decisions without risking their jobs, that nurses are not assigned to consecutive shifts with no rest, and that workers have been able to place prudent limits on the number of patients a healthcare worker has to care for; and,

WHEREAS, the state Legislature and Governor wield power over the relationship between UWHC and its employees, despite UWHC operating as a separate public authority with its own board of directors and not being directly funded by taxpayer dollars; and,

WHEREAS, in 2011 Act 10, aka the "Budget Repair Bill", stripped collective bargaining rights from most public employees, including those at UWHC; and,

WHEREAS, employees of a public authority, such as UWHC employees, unlike other public employees, have no protections under the State Employees Labor Relations Act, the Wisconsin Employment Peace Act, nor the National Labor Relations Act; and,

WHEREAS, as a result of Act 10 and the lack of protection afforded to them by other laws, over 5,000 members of the UWHC community, including the 2,300 from Madison, will become "at will" employees when their contracts end in 2014 and 2015; and,

WHEREAS, "at will" employees are subject to discipline or termination with no recourse, thus limiting the ability of employees to speak or take actions as those could affect their future employment status; and,

WHEREAS, decisions affecting the health and well-being of the residents of Madison are of great consequence to the City of Madison; and,

WHEREAS, maintaining good-paying jobs and stable employment are indisputably in the interests of the City of Madison; and,

WHEREAS, UWHC is the second largest employer in the City of Madison; and,

WHEREAS, since 2011 Wisconsin's economy has stalled, in no small part due to the economic impact of the

pay reductions, cynically referred to as “employee contributions”, that were forced upon tens of thousands of state residents by the passage of Act 10,

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, the Mayor and Common Council of the City of Madison call on UWHC to remain a responsible employer by maintaining its unionized workforce and the rights to collective action that have so successfully been applied for over 30 years; and.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that, to ensure the ongoing health and safety of the residents of the City of Madison and to maintain the economic benefits of the stable employment base of the UWHC to the City and region, the Mayor and Common Council of the City of Madison call on the Board and CEO of UW Hospitals and Clinics to join them in publicly calling on the Legislature and Governor to fully restore the rights of workers at UWHC; and,

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED, that the Mayor and Common Council of the City of Madison repeat with great urgency their call for the restoration of the rights of all public employees; the two year experiment in rolling back the right to collectively bargain has only succeeded in helping to stall our economy at a time when all Wisconsinites need it to thrive.