Bargaining for the Common Good in Health Care

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CIWO generates and disseminates new ideas, strategies, and programs that address:

...our nation’s rising inequality,
...growing precarious workforce, and
...how to support, strengthen and grow economic and racial justice organizations.

(And I am an AFT Member!)
CIWO: Major Initiatives

Membership Building and Financial Sustainability
• Strengthen the capacity of social and economic justice organizations to grow their membership bases and become more financially sustainable

Build the Bench
• Develop and support emerging leaders of our movement

Co-Enforcement of Labor Standards
• Develop innovative enforcement mechanisms by promoting strong partnerships between investigators, worker, community and non-profit legal organizations.

Bargaining for the Common Good
• Imagine and develop new forms of collective bargaining to address the broad concerns of community and labor
Bargaining for the Common Good

• What does Bargaining for Common Good mean to you?
• Why is it important now?
• Why health care?
Lessons from Candice

1. Distilling issues into demands.
2. Managing the relationship with the community partners.
3. Maintaining the relationship after bargaining.
4. Exciting to imagine the potential to go on offense.
Bargaining for the Common Good: The Approach

An innovative approach to bargaining in the health care sector that rethinks collective bargaining’s:

- Participants
- Processes
- Purposes and Goals
Bargaining for the Common Good: Participants

- Brings the community into the collective bargaining process from the start
- Enlists organizations that represent the communities involved in bargaining
- Aligns interests among allies for the common good
Bargaining for the Common Good: Processes

• Make the union and its community allies partners in the development and presentation of bargaining demands for the common good.

• Use the bargaining process to raise demands that transcend the limits of traditional collective bargaining to address systemic inequities, revenue generation, and other issues normally off limits at the bargaining table.
Bargaining for the Common Good: Purposes and Goals

• Broadens the scope of collective bargaining to expose and target the power relations undermining workers, quality health care, communities and the common good.

• Fosters solidarity between unionized workers and the broader community of health care workers, family members, and community members—everyone who cares about quality of health care!

• Creates an enduring alignment of progressive forces.
The Current Debate:

Cut Health Care Workers
or
Cut Services to People?

The Debate We Need...
New Debate:

What kind of quality health care support should we provide?

Who should pay?
1. You or someone you know had to take a second job or find an additional income source to make ends meet.

2. You know a student graduating from college with over $5,000 in debt. Stay standing if you know someone who has more than $10,000. Stay standing if you know someone with more than $20,000. Stay standing if this person is you or someone related to you.

3. You or someone you know had to take out loans to finance another family need (elder care expenses, home improvement work, etc).

4. You or someone you know postponed retirement because of their personal wealth is not sufficient to retire on the timeline they had planned.
People Earning Less, Borrowing More

*Consumer Debt Exploding Since 1970’s*

*(Total Consumer debt in $trillions)*
As Corporate Taxes Go Down, Government Borrowing Going Up!

(Outstanding municipal bonds in billions)
Wall Street Made a Killing

Financial Sector Profits

(in billions)
Corporate Profits Have Skyrocketed Since Mid-1970s

(Corporate Profits in billions)
Examples from the Field
Fix L.A. is a growing coalition of community groups, faith-based organizations and working people who are demanding that Los Angeles City leaders hold Wall Street accountable and restore vital City programs and services that have been cut.
Los Angeles Pays Massive Fees To Wall Street

- Wall Street Fees: $330+ Million
- Bureau of Street Services: Total Spending $167 Million

Money For Wall Street
Money For Our Streets
Fix L.A. Victories

1. Commitment to add 5,000 jobs and restore services to pre-2008 levels
2. A Jobs Commission that will ensure local hires/disadvantaged communities will have access to those jobs
3. A Revenue Commission that will work to reduce bank fees, renegotiate bad deals, and identify new progressive revenue sources
We had a community meeting, and 3 issues came up

1. Fear among immigrant communities over exposure of their citizenship status and a lack of translation services.

2. The hospital had sent many residents’ medical bills to collections, leading to high debt levels and ruined credit ratings.

3. Following a recent acquisition, residents expressed concern that the hospital would close maternity and obstetrics services and relocate them to a facility 40 miles away.
Questions to ask yourself

- Who in your community would be concerned in these issues?
- What would it take to turn the issue into a bargaining demand?
- How do you get members to embrace a bargaining-for-the-common-good strategy?
Bargaining for the Common Good

- Labor is under assault
- Quality Health Care is under assault
- Labor cannot reverse trends in the public or private sectors without going on the offensive and reinventing collective bargaining to force the real powers to the bargaining table
- To reinvent bargaining, unions, key stakeholders and community allies need to join in common cause and aligned interests