

# 503 Retiree

## The Newsletter of the SEIU Retirees Local 001

### Together We Rise! General Council 2018

**Our two-year goal: Win for All Oregon Families!** Raise revenues for our valuable services; grow our union in innovative ways; lift wages for low wage workers; join fights outside the bargaining table; build and strengthen membership; use new technologies to expand communication; improve Member Resource Center accessibility; invest in member leaders.

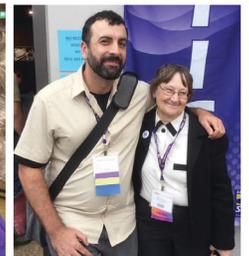
**Many members shared their victories because they were Union Strong!**

#### GC delegates voted in changes. Highlights:

- We will now have six statewide officers, up from four:
  1. Two Vice Presidents, one designated to represent either Public Sector or Care Provider Sector
  2. Secretary/Treasurer position was separated into two separate positions
- How statewide officers other than the President will be reimbursed for their lost time was changed
- A Statewide President who leaves the SEIU 503 bargaining unit can remain in office under certain conditions
- We will now have a Community Membership category

If you have any questions go to [SEIU503.org](http://SEIU503.org) for a full synopsis of resolutions passes.

It was inspiring from beginning to end!



# The Newsletter of the SEIU Retirees Local 001



**Barbara Casey**

## Dear Retirees,

**It's great to be writing to you as your President!** I look forward to working with V.P. Karla Spence Marks, Secretary Treasurer Rosalie Pedroza, and all of you!

I hope your summer has been filled with fun and adventures, travel, family, and maybe even some union activities!

Now is the time to gear up for Fall. September always seems to be a great time for renewing commitments.

We have been excellent at venting; now we have to get good at voting. Nationally, voter turn out for the 2014 mid-term elections was the lowest in over 70 years. **There is too much at stake to sit out the 2018 mid-term elections.** Our very democracy is on the line!

**In addition, elections for SEIU Statewide Officers and the Board of Directors are currently in progress.** Please read the SEIU 503 Voter's Pamphlet and cast an informed vote.

**This is a critical time for unions across the country and especially in our State.** The Janus vs. AFSCME decision was a low blow and more such "slap downs" can be expected, but TOGETHER WE RISE!

General Council was, in my opinion, less contentious than in the past, as we all realize the awesome responsibility we have. As one member stated, **"Unions protect the weak from the wicked."**

Thanks to the Local 001 General Council delegates for their strong representation: James Jacobson, Rosanne Richard, Ann Montague, and Maryann Terpestra.

I was pleased to see lots of new faces and old friends at General Council. We are over 65,000 members strong. More than ever, Oregon needs unions. **Many studies show declining membership drives down wages for BOTH union and non-union workers, because when unions are attacked, it's not just members who are harmed.**

**So the time for reacting is done; it's time for action! Union Strong, Bring It On!**

Take Care,  
**Barbara Casey, Statewide President, SEIU Local 001**

## A Warm Local 001 Thank You...

**To our outgoing officers: Donna Bradley, Secretary Treasurer; James Jacobson, Vice President; and Greg Ledbetter, President.** Thank you for your dedication, leadership, time and passion for our union.



## ...And A Warm Local 001 Welcome!

**To our incoming officers: Rosalie Pedroza, Secretary Treasurer; Barbara Casey, President; and Karla Marks, Vice President.** We welcome you!



## How this year's ballot measures will impact SEIU members

***There are 5 measures on the ballot this November. Here's what you need to know.***

### **Measure 102 - SEIU member endorsement: YES**

Ballot Title: *Allows local bonds for financing affordable housing with nongovernmental entities. Requires voter approval, annual audits.*

**Impact on SEIU members:** This measure will make it easier for local governments to raise money for affordable housing. Many SEIU members struggle to keep up with rising housing costs, and a COLA or wage increase is only so valuable if housing costs go up faster.

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### **Measure 103 - SEIU member endorsement: NO**

Ballot Title: *Amends Constitution: Prohibits taxes/fees based on transactions for "groceries" (defined) enacted or amended after September 2017.*

**Impact on SEIU members:** Constitutional Amendment 103 is an unnecessary and risky change to Oregon's constitution that would permanently carve out a wide range of transactions from any taxes or fees. Supporters claim it's meant to keep groceries tax free, but there is no current tax on groceries. And the measure is so poorly written that it would disrupt the fuel tax, bottle deposit fee, and medicaid funding, but it would not cover items families rely on like medicine, diapers and toilet paper. These carve outs could lead to a budget crisis, resulting in potential public sector layoffs, cuts to homecare and PSW programs, or cuts to the Oregon Health Plan.

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### **Measure 104 - SEIU member endorsement: NO**

Ballot Title: *Amends Constitution: Expands (beyond taxes) application of requirement that three-fifths legislative majority approve bills raising revenue.*

**Impact on SEIU members:** Constitutional Amendment 104 is an unnecessary constitutional amendment. There is already a supermajority requirement for tax increases in Oregon. Our constitution should only be changed when there is a clear and urgent problem. Making this change would jeopardize funding for public schools, Medicaid, and other essential services. It would create gridlock in Salem. In recent years, when budget

deficits have required the legislature to make cuts, some politicians have used the supermajority requirement to try to attack

SEIU members' benefits or cut funding to the programs we provide. Expanding this requirement puts our members at even greater risk, and it would also make it harder for the legislature to close wasteful tax loopholes that benefit only special interests and politicians.

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### **Measure 105 - SEIU member endorsement: NO**

Ballot Title: *Repeals law limiting use of state/local law enforcement resources to enforce federal immigration laws.*

**Impact on SEIU members:** Immigrants living in Oregon are part of our families, communities, workplaces, and our union. If Measure 105 passes, it could open the door to racial profiling and families being torn apart, simply because someone is perceived to be an undocumented immigrant. That's not the Oregon way. In addition, Oregon's current law provides clear guidance to local law enforcement officers on how to handle complicated immigration issues. It creates a bright line that says local police should be focused on solving local problems. Measure 105 would erase this clarity and open the door to local resources being used in federal immigration matters. **Learn more:** <https://orunited.org/>

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### **Measure 106 - SEIU member endorsement: NO**

Ballot Title: *Amends Constitution: Prohibits spending "public funds" (defined) directly/indirectly for "abortion" (defined); exceptions; reduces abortion access.*

**Impact on SEIU members:** If Measure 106 passes public service members would no longer be eligible for abortion coverage as part of their public employee benefits plan or through their Medicaid plan. Measure 106 sets a dangerous precedent of cherry picking which medical procedures will or will not be covered by public insurance and interferes with our members' bargained benefits. **Learn more:** <https://nocutstocare.com/>

## Issue Brief: Healthcare in the 2018 Governor's race

### Measure 101

Voters overwhelmingly approved Measure 101 in a special election on January 23, 2018. The measure funded the Oregon Health Plan. Had it been defeated, 430,000 Oregonians — including many SEIU 503 homecare workers — would have been at risk of losing their health insurance.

- **Kate Brown** – Yes on Measure 101
- **Knute Buehler** – No on Measure 101

(SOURCE: LEADING CANDIDATES FOR GOVERNOR DISAGREE ON MEASURE 101: BROWN'S A "YES," BUEHLER A "NO", WILLAMETTE WEEK, JANUARY 2018)

### State Worker Healthcare Benefits

Thanks to strong union membership in Oregon, public employees have bargained and maintained good healthcare benefits, which are managed by the Public Employee Benefits Board (PEBB).

- **Kate Brown** has said that cutting worker compensation, which includes healthcare benefits, will hurt our public services by making it harder to hire skilled people to do these important jobs.
- **Knute Buehler** has made budget cuts at PEBB a key part of his platform.

(KATE SOURCE: GOV. KATE BROWN ANNOUNCES THREE-PRONGED APPROACH TO CUT STATE COSTS -THE GOVERNOR'S PLAN DOES NOT INCLUDE CUTS TO PUBLIC EMPLOYEE HEALTHCARE PLANS- OREGONIAN, APRIL 2017)

(KNUTE SOURCE: "ASKED HOW HE WOULD PAY FOR THE AMBITIOUS PLAN, BUEHLER SAID HE WOULD DO SO WITH COST-SAVINGS FROM THE STATE BUDGET ... A GOAL OF HIS HEALTH CARE PLAN IS TO DRIVE DOWN STATE EMPLOYEE HEALTH COSTS." – PORTLAND TRIBUNE, JULY 2018)

### Expanding Access To Healthcare

Both candidates say they support full healthcare access. However, their records tell a different story.

- Under **Kate Brown's** leadership, Oregon has expanded healthcare access to 95% of the state, including 100% of Oregon children. She supported the funding needed to make this happen (Measure 101) as well as the legislation that expanded healthcare access to all children (SB 558).
- **Knute Buehler** opposed both Measure 101 and SB 558.

(SOURCE: SB 558, OREGON LEGISLATURE)

**Kate Brown has demonstrated good leadership on healthcare during her time as Governor, and she is committed to building on the progress we've made in Oregon.** Knute Buehler has said many of the right things. (It's worth noting that Buehler's healthcare platform includes a plan to cut opioid deaths in half, a laudable goal.) However, his record tells a different story.

**Buehler's focus on taking away benefits from public employees – be they retirement or healthcare benefits – reveals a politics of winners and losers.** Our focus should be on improving healthcare plans for everyone, not weakening the few good ones to pay for marginal gains elsewhere.

**After examining these and other issues, SEIU 503 members on the CAPE Council – our union's political board – voted to endorse Kate Brown for Governor of Oregon.**

# The Best Candidates For The Job

## Tiffany Mitchell House District 32

by Karla Marks

Tiffany Mitchell is a 34 year-old Case Management Coordinator at the Department of Human Services working in child welfare and previously with the Clatsop County Circuit Court. She is also the Democratic nominee to run in the General Election in House District 32. In an upset primary election, she took out two challengers who underestimated her candidacy.



When I met with her on June 10th, she was attending a CAPE meeting as a union leader, fresh off the campaign and eager to begin her General Election campaign.

***"We need more normal people making decisions that affect normal working class people."***

Tiffany told me that she moved here from Utah, a right-to-work (for less) state and was disappointed that the Courts were not organized. She knew first hand how a union made a difference. She joined the union immediately when she went to work for DHS.

Her decision to run was made literally in the 11th hour. She knew if she won, it would mean giving up her State job. (It is illegal for a State employee to hold a legislative elected seat). It was a difficult decision with serious financial implications but she ran because she knew she had the right platform to represent her constituents in Clatsop, Tillamook and Washington Counties.

Her priorities are health care, mental health and drug abuse. She describes her style of leadership as collaborative. She's willing to talk to others and listen to each side of an issue. She is very cognizant of retiree issues. She wants to make sure that rather than saddling present public employees with reduced retirement income, she wants to secure

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## Shemia Fagan House District 32

by Barbara Casey

Shemia Fagan, just 36, unseated incumbent State Senator Rod Monroe (East Portland), a landlord opposed to tenant protections, in Oregon's May primary.

There is a record number of women running for office to resist both Trump and Trumpian policies. At her victory rally, Shemia stated "This is a message election, and the message is Oregonians are ready to deal with the housing crisis".

Ms. Fagan knows the struggles of Oregon's working families because she lived them. She ran on solving the housing crisis. She recognizes that keeping a roof over your head is not easy. Memories of spontaneous camping trips were really her dad trying to put a positive spin on her family's homelessness.

An energetic speaker and a delightful dinner companion, we spoke in Eugene at General Council where she attended to thank members for their efforts on her behalf.

***"Do you pay rent or a mortgage? Do you want a safe workplace and a secure retirement, does your family need affordable daycare? How about healthcare? Do you value education, safe roads, clean water, the very air you breathe? Politicians make the laws that govern your life. Don't give up, rise up!"***

How did she do it? Shemia hit the ground running and she had a good ground game. She garnered 62% of the votes in a 3-way race against a 40 year incumbent. Shemia wants to see change, vowing that every Oregonian deserves safe, stable

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## ...Shemia Fagan *continued.*

affordable housing. SEIU503 provided critical support with a strong CAPE endorsement and motivated volunteers. Ms. Fagan is grateful and humbled for the support of working people who serve our state every day.

She believes strongly that members especially Retirees tell their personal stories. She is angry that a PERS retirement is characterized as a "slush fund". PERS wages, she says, were earned and that money is spent on rents, mortgages, food, gas to volunteer—spent on life's necessities. Shemia feels PERS reform is code for cut wages/hurt families.

Shemia opposes this "reform". Any legislation she sees that considers PERS must have 3 criteria: be fair, be legal and save real money. She hasn't seen anything yet that passes the test.

Regarding "Janus", Shemia states we must look to our extensive "braintrust" to combat this decision, especially protecting members personal information as we do battle with the Freedom Foundation and the right wing billionaires who want you to believe you will get the same wages, benefits, and representation as membership in a union. **"This is false."** Shemia is angry now. **"This is what they want for you, to opt out so unions can be starved out. They are gambling with your livelihood and your future with no guarantees".**

Asked what she would say to someone who is not interested in politics; too messy, too divisive etc. Shemia asks, "Do you pay rent or a

mortgage? Do you want a safe workplace and a secure retirement, does your family need affordable daycare? How about healthcare? Do you value education, safe roads, clean water, the very air you breathe? Politicians make the laws that govern your life. Don't give up, rise up!"

Shemia ended with a heartfelt thank you to SEIU503 for a historic upset, for our faith, resources and people power.

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## ...Tiffany Mitchell *continued.*

revenue by adopting a better, more fair tax structure.

Tiffany told me she would not have won this race without the support of SEIU Local 503 volunteers who came out to knock on doors and call voters. "It was a wide ride". She hopes that her experience will inspire other women to seek to win positions of power. "We need more normal people making decisions that affect normal working class people."

We couldn't agree more.

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**For more information about candidate and political endorsements go to:**

**SEIU503.org**

## Meet New Retiree, Evelyn Pech



**Evelyn (Evie) Pech was hired as the first woman road maintenance worker for the Marion County Department of Public Works on November 24, 1978.**

This initial hire was made through the Comprehensive

Employment and Training Act (CETA) signed by President Richard Nixon in 1973. Because her male supervisor was not interested in providing her with training opportunities, she spent the first five years as a traffic flagger. Unbeknownst to their own supervisors, some of her co-workers began to train her on how to operate trucks, mowers and other equipment. Their only interest was in having an additional person available to do the work.

Over the years, Evie took advantage of all available training opportunities and became the in-house trainer for Temporary Traffic Control and obtained her license as an herbicide applicator. This involved learning about noxious chemicals and weeds and how to safely apply for best results.

Evie was active with the MCEA Labor Union within SEIU and served as a Steward, Treasurer and eventually the President representing members on the Health Insurance Study Committee and at General Council. She supported her fellow state workers during the strikes of 1987 and 1995 and fought against the decertification action launched by some MCEA employees.

In 1997, Evie was promoted to crew leader with the goal of moving into a management position. That goal was realized in 2004 when she was promoted to the Aumsville District and Vegetation Crew Supervisor. As a manager, Evie was no longer able to be an active union member. In leaving her leadership position in MCEA, she told members, "Remember, workers need good managers" which is what she intended to be. Over the next thirteen years, Evie retained her Union membership by paying dues as an associate member and continued participation with the Lavender Caucus.

Evie retired on August 1, 2017 after 37 years with Marion County Public Works. She is looking forward to gardening, attending OSU women's basketball games, traveling with her partner, participating with Local 001 (Retirees) and "not getting up at 5:30 a.m!"

### **Past President Kathie Best Officially Retires!**

On June 15, Kathie's many friends and family came together to celebrate Kathie's years of service in SEIU Local 503 as a leader and staff of our union. Welcome to retirement, Kathie!

*PICTURED LEFT TO RIGHT:* Karla Marks and husband Morey, Kathie Best, Rosalie Pedroza and Joye Camacho



## London In The Spring by Ann Montague

**I got to spend a month in London where I was steeped in history and where so many of my ancestors lived and are buried.** Besides museums and art galleries and riding on the Underground, I specifically planned to be there for May Day, or as they call it, International Workers Day. I was also there during a regional election and got to see the new surge of unions and their Party...the Labour Party.

The growth of the Labour Party under Jeremy Corbyn has been compared in the United States to Bernie Sanders and the Democrats. The fact that young people are joining the Labour Party in huge numbers is really the only similarity. The parties are totally different.

They were having regional elections while I was there and I saw a lot of door to door campaigning by Labour, but I saw no billboards for candidates. It is all about the party. There were no paid campaign ads (yahoo) for candidates. The BBC gave each party time for a 10 minute video to explain why voters should choose their party. It was run only on two different evenings.

The real difference of course is that the Labour Party receives no corporate money or money from

any business. They are totally funded by unions and individual Labour Party members. People can actually be members of the party which costs about \$7.00 and then you are a member and you can vote for Party leader (That person will become Prime Minister if the party wins in the national election). Jeremy Corbyn has won two elections as leader of the Labour Party.



Rail which is a big demand from the Rail Union.

In the May local election Labour won big in working class parts of England. It was interesting to see that as Labour grows in strength, the other parties wither away. The Liberal Democrats a centrist corporate party like the Democratic Party can barely get 10% of the vote these days. Workers are leaving them and joining Labour. And UKIP, the right wing nationalist party has completely disappeared. Its members are voting Conservative. Unions in Britain have their own party. It is a country to watch..

The Labour Party Manifesto is what all candidates support. It is created with major input from unions and individual members. It is very comprehensive. The current Manifesto calls for renationalization of all public services that have been privatized over the past decades - specifically British