Employee Representation #4

Subject: Expanding the Contract Enforcement Team to Better Support Stewards

Authored by: Kaellen Hessel-Owens, Elyse Scanlon, James VanderZanden, Kathy Lamar, and Angie Foster, Local 108, Local 581

Submitted by: Board of Directors

WHEREAS, providing members with better service and stewards with more assistance would save our Union money by proactively preventing more Duty of Fair Representation payments in the long-term; and

WHEREAS, our Union has 1048 stewards and stewards-in-training who turn to our Contract Enforcement Team for training, mentoring, assistance with cases, and even taking on representation when a steward is unavailable or a case is particularly difficult; and

WHEREAS, our Union's 2025-2030 Strategic Plan calls for unionizing 10,000 new workers, these new workers will require training on their new collective bargaining agreements, guidance and mentorship for new stewards, and more assistance than established sub-locals; and

WHEREAS, increasing membership increases the amount of work done by staff and our money is better spent increasing the number of CET staff (instead of paying out DFRs) because it is also investing in building worker power; and

WHEREAS, there are far more field organizers than CET organizers supporting the same amount of represented workers; and

WHEREAS, workloads for several CET staff are already at their breaking points as evidenced by the 281 grievances opened and tracked by CET, which is estimated to be about ⅓ of the total amount filed by stewards; and

WHEREAS, our Strategic Plan calls for "focusing on steward support, mentorship, training access," providing members with CBA training, developing systems so member leaders can represent coworkers, and building opportunities for steward mentorship, and such work falls under the purview of CET; and

WHEREAS, a common reason people tell us that they left our union is because they do not feel like they received the help or support they needed and our Strategic Plan includes building systems to encourage workers to rejoin our Union; and

WHEREAS, our Union helps members fight for sustainable workloads, so should we demand the same for our union's staff; and

WHEREAS, using the Specials Coalition as just one example of where there is need; and

WHEREAS, the Specials Coalition is made up of 15 agencies (including one of the largest sub-locals) and 13 boards – each with their own nuances, unique contract language, sub-local structures, and member leaders; and

WHEREAS, there are 5 field organizers for the Specials Coalition but only one CET organizer; and

WHEREAS, the Specials Coalition's CET organizer doesn't simply have one straight-forward contract to enforce, but must be aware of up 16 different possible deviations that these agencies can have for the more than 100 articles in the CBA; and

WHEREAS, the Specials Coalition contains 14 different Human Resources departments each with their own idiosyncrasies, interpretations of the contract, processes, and procedures, thereby demanding 14 different strategies for working with them; and

WHEREAS, the average tenure of stewards within the Specials Coalition is only 3.96 years, the median tenure is 1.3 years, and the most common tenure is 0, they therefore require additional guidance, mentorship, and training; and

WHEREAS, Specials Coalition stewards have seen how life changing it can be for workers to benefit from receiving representation or mentoring from our current CET organizer, and seeing the dedication and commitment she has to exhausting every possible opportunity to help a worker; and

WHEREAS, these stewards also know how time-consuming and emotionally draining these cases are, and how many crises keep happening at our agencies simultaneously; and

WHEREAS, leadership from all 16 sub-locals within Specials Coalition unanimously agree on the need for more Contract Enforcement Team organizers.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that SEIU Local 503, OPEU shall support a workload analysis of the Contract Enforcement Team positions with input from the Stewards Committee and the legal department.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, the analysis will be done in the fall of 2027 to have recommendations for staffing before the Board and General Council to consider for the 2027 budget.

THEREFORE, BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that this analysis shall be shared as a report, which shall be presented to the Board of Directors, with Leadership of the SEIU 503 staff union, UWU, in attendance to provide their perspectives to the Board, ensuring transparency and opportunity for the Board fully understand the situation so they might

confidently make any final decisions on matter, such as directing the organization to increase FTEs.

IMPACT STATEMENTS

Financial: The work to create the report could be worked into current program and there would be no impact this fiscal year; recommendations for future years may have fiscal impact but are unknown until the report is done.

Equity: This resolution may have a positive impact. A workload analysis would provide insight into how members are currently supported by the Contract Enforcement Team and highilght areas where more staffing may be needed, resulting in more equitable contract support for members across our Union.

Legal: No legal impact

Political: No political impact