

March 19, 2010

Dear Borgess RN Staff Council members,

MNA is well aware of the intimidation and harassment you are experiencing in the workplace and we are doing everything we can to address this vile behavior. Consistently, management has taken you away from your patient assignments for the sole purpose of disrupting the care you're providing and making you feel unsure of your practice. It's an unfortunate reality, but don't be surprised if management begins to call you at home disrupting your time off. The gloves are off and your personal time is fair game.

Don't think that you've been abandoned and MNA doesn't realize the pressure you feel. We have filed unfair labor practice charges with the National Labor Relations Board on your behalf and we have already spoken with the Board agent who assures us that they will do a complete investigation of the legality of the administration's campaign. Our attorneys in Michigan and California have every confidence that your strength and solidarity will be rewarded when the National Labor Relations Board issues their findings against the Hospital.

We are working with your leadership to ensure that we hold the administration accountable for their misconduct. We heard you loud and clear when over 600 of you signed a petition just a few short weeks ago demanding the Employer withdraw its proposals regarding the personnel policies. In fact, our attorneys have instructed us that those proposals are not mandatory subjects for bargaining and violate section 8 of the National Labor Relations Act. We've also heard and are thankful for the over 300 nurses that attended our membership meetings in March urging us to continue the campaign to maintain our contractual rights to speak out for your patients. Safe patient care – the ability for you to provide the care that you know is needed – has always and will continue to be the central theme of our negotiations.

We have further meetings scheduled with the Employer and our next negotiation session is April 6th. Stay united so that the Employer witnesses your solidarity and comes to the table prepared to prove that they really do what they claim in print - respect and support the will of the registered nurses.

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For the Hospital, the negotiations are not about what's best for nurses. It's about power – taking it from you and giving it to them through a battle for your hearts and minds. Every action by this administration has been designed to evoke emotion, specifically fear and intimidation. They want you timid and confused so that you're at their mercy. Don't give them that ability. They have not earned that respect nor do they deserve that kind of power.

The impact of this agreement cannot be measured in the terms that are negotiated today but rather the lack of any legitimate safeguards to protect you and your practice in the future. Don't be fooled. You have the power in your hands to decide whether or not you will have a say in the future of nursing at Borgess Health. Your CEO, an outsider from Wisconsin, wants to have complete control and he thinks he can scare you enough to get it. MNA has been helping you keep and strengthen your voice for over 35 years and we will continue to do so. Tough as it is, stressful though it seems, you must stay resilient. Do not break. Do not bend. Do not let your voice be quieted.

I admire your tenacity and commitment. Continue to remain strong.

In solidarity,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "John Karebian". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

John Karebian
Executive Director