

1 2014 RES-550
2 SUPPORTING BARGAINING BETWEEN SEIU HEALTHCARE WISCONSIN MERITER
3 REGISTERED NURSES AND MERITER UNITY POINT HEALTH
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5 Meriter Hospital is the Dane County area's community hospital, serving the healthcare interests
6 of Dane County citizens since it was founded as Madison General Hospital in 1902. Today, 113
7 years later, Meriter Hospital has approximately 3000 employees, including more than 750
8 registered nurses. Meriter was acquired in 2014 by Unity Point Health, a multi-state health care
9 organization headquartered in Iowa. Unity Point Health is comprised of 16 Hospitals and
10 several clinics across the Midwest. Meriter Hospital is its largest hospital.
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12 All Dane County citizens benefit from top quality patient care. This includes employers seeking
13 health care coverage for their families and employees. A key part of top quality patient care is a
14 healthcare workforce that is treated with respect and dignity. The registered nurses employed
15 by Meriter Unity Point Health work hard everyday to provide the highest level of quality care to
16 the citizens of Dane County.
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18 The registered nurses employed by Meriter Unity Point Health are engaged in good faith
19 bargaining, through their union, SEIU Healthcare Wisconsin, with Meriter Unity Point Health.
20 The registered nurses are committed to insuring that the high level of healthcare services at
21 Meriter is maintained, and that the standards established at Meriter – through collective
22 bargaining -- are not degraded in an attempt by Unity Point Health to impose uniformity across
23 their system. The nurses are proposing maintaining the highest standards related to staffing,
24 safe workloads, educational opportunities, training, and employee benefits.
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26 The County Board approved Res 67, 2013-2014, Supporting Bargaining Between SEIU
27 Healthcare Wisconsin Meriter Registered Nurses and Meriter Hospital. The SEIU Registered
28 Nurses were able to negotiate fairly with then Meriter Hospital and maintain their pension and
29 health care benefits in exchange for wage increases. Meriter Unity Point Health is currently
30 attempting to decrease or eliminate entirely those earned benefits.
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32 Res 67, 2013-2014 noted Meriter Hospital had recorded profits in excess of \$45 million in 2011.
33 Meriter Hospital Unity Point Health recorded increased profits of \$56 million in 2013.
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35 **NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED**, that the Dane County Board of Supervisors supports
36 the SEIU Healthcare Wisconsin Meriter Registered Nurses bargaining unit's efforts to come to a
37 fair labor agreement with Meriter Unity Point Health.
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39 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that the Dane County Board of Supervisors strongly encourages
40 Meriter Unity Point Health to show its value and respect of its registered nurses and reach an
41 amicable collective bargaining agreement that maintains the standards achieved in the past
42 through collective bargaining.
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44 **BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED** that a copy of this resolution be forwarded to Meriter Hospital
45 Unity Point Health and SEIU Healthcare Wisconsin.
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