



HOSPITAL EMPLOYEES' UNION

# NEWSLETTER

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## HEU members deliver 15,000-strong living wage petition to Campbell at Liberal campaign stop

*Petition calls for government accountability for hospital contractors' performance, living wages, and clean, safe hospitals*

At a campaign stop in Burnaby today, HEU members – who work in housekeeping for Sodexo, Aramark and Compass (the Big 3) – presented Gordon Campbell with 15,000 signatures calling on government and its health authorities to take responsibility for the wages and working conditions provided by their contractors.

As Campbell approached the crowd, TV and newspaper reporters zeroed in on the workers and their banners that read “work should lift you out of poverty, not keep you there” and “Mr. Premier, we have 15,000 signatures for government action on living wages and clean, safe hospitals.”

Juvelita Dacpano, a housekeeper working for Aramark at UBC hospital, then made her way through the throng of people, placed herself in Campbell's path, and presented him with a box of more than 15,000 petition signatures.

When told that the petitions called on government to be accountable for the wages and working conditions needed for clean, safe hospitals, Campbell said, “I agree with you.”

HEU members promised to keep up the pressure on Campbell and other Liberal candidates, as the provincial election campaign continues.

The petitions are part of an ongoing campaign, supported by allies from community, labour and faith-based organizations. Signatures were gathered during many hours of work by members employed by the Big 3 and in the facilities subsector.

HEU members who work in housekeeping and dietary services are currently in negotiations with Sodexo, Aramark and Compass. The majority of workers in this sector earn \$13.05 an hour, with no pension plan, between six and 10 sick days per year, and few benefits. At the same time, Sodexo, Aramark and Compass receive hundreds of millions of dollars in government contracts.

Over the past year, surveys of contractor-employed support services workers in five hospitals found that 30 to 50 per cent hold more than one job, while others face the stress of choosing between food and heat, or struggling to afford basics for their kids like school field trips.

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