

## **Open Letter to Members of United Healthcare Workers-West Delegate Election Committee**



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Mary Corson  
Mell Garcia  
Dan Martin  
Eloise Reese-Burns  
Michael Rivera  
Helen York-Jones  
SEIU United Healthcare Workers-West  
560 Thomas L. Berkley Way  
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Brothers and Sisters:

For the last few months UHW-W has publicly criticized and attacked fellow SEIU leaders and unions charging we are “undemocratic.”

But when we learned this week that UHW-W disenfranchised more than 98% of its own membership in elections for the local’s delegation to SEIU’s upcoming convention, your own accusations rang hollow.

It has become clear it was not a mistake to deny UHW-W members the ability to run for delegate and participate in our union’s convention. UHW-W’s response to members’ complaints about rank-and-file disenfranchisement speaks volumes about the value UHW-W places on union democracy and the respect it has for members’ opinions. A letter to one of these members explains why you excluded rank and file members from running for the local’s convention delegation, stating “...UHW specifically did this to insure that the people who know the most about the Union and are most actively involved in it would be delegates.”

What’s worse is the contempt you express for your own rank-and-file membership. According to committee member Rivera, “We had several meetings to establish guidelines for eligibility and one of the questions raised was how, once the membership was informed that the convention was being held in Puerto Rico, do we conduct an election that best served the members while avoiding a run of hopefuls in search only of a free vacation to Puerto Rico?” These hardly sound like the deliberations of a “bottom-up” organization.

We welcome healthy debate about SEIU and the future of the labor movement, but your hypocrisy undermines principled discussions. Democracy begins at home. UHW needs

to start living up to the ideals you proclaim and apologize to UHW members and the rest of the SEIU community.

In unity,



Keith Kelleher  
SEIU Local 880



Kristy Sermersheim  
SEIU Local 521



Rickman Jackson  
SEIU Healthcare MI