



SEIU Healthcare
United for Quality Care



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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THREE SEIU UNIONS ENDORSE DAN ONORATO FOR GOVERNOR

*– SEIU Healthcare Pennsylvania, 32BJ and Workers United PA Joint Board
to Mobilize Members for Onorato –*

Pittsburgh, PA – Citing his support for working families and a strong plan for creating good jobs and keeping health care affordable, three locals of the Service Employees International Union today endorsed Allegheny County Chief Executive Dan Onorato for Governor. The unions, SEIU Healthcare Pennsylvania, 32BJ and Workers United Pennsylvania Joint Board, represent more than 43,000 workers across Pennsylvania in health care, building service, food service, laundry and hospitality industries.

“Pennsylvania’s working families need a leader who will fight to bring and keep good jobs in Pennsylvania,” said Gabe Morgan, 32BJ Western Pennsylvania Director. Across the state, 32BJ represents 16,000 property service workers, including commercial cleaners, security officers, school maintenance workers and cafeteria workers. “Onorato knows what it takes to bring good jobs into the community and lift people out of poverty.”

Recently, County Executive Onorato announced his support for legislation to ensure good jobs are created at County-subsidized developments and through the County’s service contracts. A similar prevailing wage bill, requiring developers and contractors to pay service workers the local private-sector rate, was passed with a unanimous vote by the Pittsburgh City Council earlier this week.

“I am enormously pleased to receive the support from SEIU locals,” said Onorato. “SEIU has been a force for progressive policy and with their support, I hope to not only win this year, but to begin to make the fundamental change that Pennsylvania, its workers and families need, expect and deserve.”

The three unions, known for their strength in mobilizing members and voters to support endorsed candidates, are promising a voter outreach campaign, including mailings, door-to-door canvassing outreach and member mobilization in support of Onorato’s election. During the 2008 elections, the three unions were part of a larger SEIU program through which staff, volunteers and members door-knocked and called more than 1 million households in support of President Obama and other progressive candidates.

“Our members see the state’s health care crisis from the front lines every day,” said Neal Bisno, President of SEIU Healthcare Pennsylvania. SEIU Healthcare Pennsylvania is the state’s largest union of nurses and health care workers, representing over 20,000 caregivers in hospitals, nursing homes, home care, and State health facilities. “From registered nurses in hospitals to home care attendants in seniors’ homes, health care workers want a leader who understands that high quality affordable health care is part of the solution to our economy.”

The three endorsing unions, all growing in size, have proven track-records of bringing low-wage workers out of poverty, raising standards for working families and improving the quality of care and the services they provide to Pennsylvania's communities. Many direct care workers and cleaners without union representation earn little more than the minimum wage and often work without health care for themselves and their families.

"It's getting harder and harder for working Pennsylvanians to provide for their families," said David Melman, Workers United PA Joint Board Manager. The PA Joint Board represents 7,000 hotel, laundry, food service, manufacturing and distribution workers. "We can count on Onorato to help us create an economy that will let us keep our homes, send our kids to college and save for retirement."

According to the latest Census data, 1.2 million Pennsylvanians are uninsured, and many more are struggling to keep their health care coverage as employer-based coverage declines and premium prices rise.

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