

Why hasn't CRONA released the vote totals on the contract?

Stanford Nurses Rank-and-File Committee
5 May 2022

Fellow nurses:

It has been days since the Committee for Recognition of Nursing Achievement (CRONA) ended our powerful strike and sent us back to work on the basis of a contract which ignored our basic demands for meaningful staffing improvements and wage increases to protect us from record high inflation.

Many of us are outraged by the undemocratic methods CRONA officials used to get this sellout contract passed. Union officials who signed a pledge to management to unanimously push this deal, resorted to lies, intimidation, violations of the union's own bylaws and possibly fraud to fulfill their commitment to Stanford Health Care.

CRONA announced that the contract passed by 83 percent but has never released the actual details of the vote. We find this claim highly suspicious.

Workers have been told that abstentions were counted as "no" votes, in the same manner as the strike authorization vote.

CRONA would have us believe that only 850 out of 5,000 nurses voted "no" on this miserable contract or abstained from the vote.

A great number of us voted "no," but a lot of us also did not vote at all because we were disgusted with how this strike was brought to an end. On top of that many of us live 1-2 hours from work and the snap vote was called at the last minute.

Nurses who voted in person Sunday saw only a mediocre turnout at the polling place in Menlo Park. Even if some nurses voted by proxy, it is hard to believe turnout was 83 percent, let alone that 83 percent of nurses who turned out voted "yes."

The Stanford Nurses Rank-and-File Committee (SNRFC) was founded to expand our struggle and join with nurses around the state and beyond to win our just demands for safe staffing, an end to exhausting and dangerous workloads and a substantial raise and cost-of-

living protections.

The SNRFC demands that CRONA release the physical ballots to a team of rank-and-file nurses (not CRONA officials) representing different units to count the votes and ensure the vote was legitimate. According to the tentative agreement, the entire CRONA executive and bargaining committee told management they were committed to this contract being passed. How can they be trusted to count the ballots accurately when they were not a neutral party, let alone our advocates?

If CRONA has nothing to hide, they will accept this reasonable request. Since we are being compelled to work under this contract for the next three years, we want to make sure the vote was valid.

The whole experience of the strike makes clear that rank-and-file nurses have to take our fate into our own hands. Throughout the course of this fight, CRONA officials demonstrated that they were loyal to the Stanford board of directors, not to the members who pay them dues.

CRONA shut down our powerful strike right at the point when management was telling union officials that they were unable to run the hospital without us.

After announcing a deal CRONA tried to get us to vote on it based on their own self-serving "highlights." We only got the full agreement after nurses demanded loud and clear that CRONA had to release it.

CRONA denied us sufficient time to read through the entire 55-page tentative agreement. This was a blatant violation of the union's own bylaws, which say we must have adequate time before a vote.

When we called for an additional two business days to study and discuss the terms of the agreement, CRONA officials told us that the vote had to be rushed because the hospital needed us back.

Then came the intimidation with CRONA repeating Stanford's threat that they would only continue to provide medical insurance if we ratified their rotten deal.

All of this begs the question: Which side is CRONA on? To ask the question is to answer it.

We went on strike for better staffing, for safer working conditions, for an end to the burnout, high turnover rates and impossible workloads. We struck for wages that allow us to live close to work and provide for our families amid record high inflation. We are the ones fighting and we are the ones who have the right to decide when these demands are met and when our strike is over!

We are one week from the sentencing of RaDonda Vaught, who has been unjustly convicted of “negligent homicide” for a lethal medication error. Nurses all over the world have been following her case closely and we thought of her while we fought on the picket line this week. On a daily basis we are placed in extremely stressful situations that make medication errors more likely. We are rushing through medication passes, distracted with multiple tasks at once, and clouded with the anxiety and stress of a busy, understaffed shift.

Tragically, a nurse at Kaiser Santa Clara Medical Center was recently driven to suicide, just months after we lost traveling nurse Michael Odell at Stanford. Nurse suicides are 41 percent higher for male nurses and nearly 58 percent higher for female nurses compared to the general population.

We are taking a stand for all nurses and our fight is far from over.

We need unite with all nurses and health care workers throughout California and internationally. There are powerful strikes of nurses taking place throughout the world right now, as nurses everywhere confront the same issues we do, entering the third year of the COVID-19 pandemic.

To unite these struggles, we have to build new organizations, democratically controlled by rank-and-file nurses ourselves.

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To contact the WSWs and the
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wsws.org/contact