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JANUARY 16, 2008

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**IN-HOME SUPPORTIVE SERVICES (IHSS) PUBLIC
AUTHORITY OF MARIN NEGOTIATES SUCCESSFUL
LABOR AGREEMENT WITH SEIU UNITED
HEALTHCARE WORKERS UNION**

New Contract Includes Hourly Increases and Additional Benefits

SAN RAFAEL, CA – In-Home Supportive Services (IHSS) Public Authority of Marin, a public agency that serves low-income elderly and disabled residents of Marin, has negotiated a successful labor agreement with SEIU United Healthcare Workers Union, it was announced by Herb Meyer, Chairman of the six-year old agency. The agreement, which was reached December 14, 2007, was ratified on January 4, 2008 and is in effect through December 31, 2009. The previous labor agreement had expired on July 31, 2007.

The terms include an increase in hourly wages from \$10.50 per hour to \$11.30 per hour, effective March 1, 2008. It has been ratified by the Union membership, adopted by the IHSS Public Authority Governing Board, approved by the Board of Supervisors on January 15 and is pending approval by the State of California. The second increase, from \$11.30 to \$11.50 per hour, goes into effective January 1, 2009. In addition, it was negotiated that effective February 1, the Public Authority will contribute \$417.50 per employee, with employee share of \$17.50, to implement the Kaiser Permanente-NexStep Plan. The cost of the health insurance is over \$5,000 per year. Additional benefits include a \$288 annual per person contribution for dental coverage and increased covered participants from 265 to 280.

“Marin County’s 1450 IHSS care providers are very appreciative of the improvements in the new labor agreement, approved by the Public Authority Governing Board and County of Marin,” said Dale Kemp, IHSS care provider.

“UHW has a goal to build a qualified, motivated work force for IHSS consumers,” said Peter Tiernan, Lead Organizer North Bay SEIU United Healthcare Workers West. “Seniors and people with disabilities deserve to remain living independently in their own homes as long as possible.”

“As a recipient of in-home supportive services, I have first hand experience with the frustrations of finding and retaining the best in-home care provider,” said Chairman Herb Meyer. “After I was first injured in a sailing accident, I needed help to do everything and struggled to find the right health care worker. Today, I am fortunate to have an IHSS care provider who has worked for me for 14 years. These pending hourly increases will enable my provider to continue to work for me, which is a tremendous relief.”

IHSS Public Authority of Marin recruits, screens, trains and refers qualified providers and helps consumers find qualified in-home care.

“As a Marin County social worker who has worked with numerous recipients of the IHSS program, I frequently hear about the difficulties of retaining the right IHSS care provider,” said Angelo Sacheli, Chairman Labor-Management Committee and Labor Bargaining. “The increased benefits in this new labor agreement will help Marin County IHSS recipients who need the most help to hold on to the hardest working IHSS care providers.”

The agreement provides a re-open discussion of the Memorandum of Understanding no later than September 1, 2008 to collaboratively meet over contributions rates, enrollment caps and/or plan design and providers for the health, dental and vision plans.

Since the Public Authority was launched in November 2003, IHSS Public Authority has grown to serve over 479 IHSS consumers annually, of which 48% are under the age of 50. The Public Authority also serves as a community forum through which IHSS consumers, providers and other stakeholders provide input and make decisions on IHSS service delivery issues. The County of Marin Adult Social Services administers the IHSS program.