

**Presentation to the Sutter County Board of Supervisors  
November 6, 2007**

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My name is Violet Fagan, I am a homecare provider and a member of CUHW which is California United Homecare Worker.

I would like to address the counter offer of a nickel an hour wage increase that Sutter County has offered CUHW in negotiations for a new contract.

Three years ago, when we were negotiating the first contract with Sutter County there were over 600 providers. Now, as of the last list of providers that I have seen, and incidentally that list was provided by the Public Authority and dated September 7, 2007, there are 525 listed with at least eight of these people saying that they no longer work for IHSS. That is almost 100 fewer homecare workers.

There are a few reasons for the reduction in the workforce. But gentlemen, I stand here before you to tell you that the main reason is because they cannot live on the wages Sutter County offers. The providers are forced to work elsewhere. Some have gone into work for the more affluent, who can afford to pay for their own homecare, some have gone to work in other counties that pay their homecare workers better benefits and wages, and some have left the homecare field altogether.

As a member organizer I have talked to hundreds of homecare workers and have heard heartbreaking stories, such as having to make decisions that no one should really have to make.

For example: when the paycheck comes in do they:

- 1) pay their PG&E bill,
- 2) do they buy groceries to feed themselves and their families, or
- 3) do they buy the medicine that they have been out of for the last week as their insurance doesn't cover it.

Or better yet, do they take their sick child to the doctor as they have no insurance?

These kinds of decisions are driving the homecare workers out of Sutter County to counties such as Sacramento, Yolo, and Yuba – yes Yuba. Even Yuba County pays better wages than Sutter to the homecare workers. Some consumers have considered moving to Yuba or Yolo Counties so their providers would get better wages. That tells me Sutter County could be forcing other counties to take care of their responsibilities. And why?

It is ludicrous, gentlemen, given the fact that approximately 99 percent of wages and benefits paid to homecare workers are paid up front and reimbursed by Federal and State monies. The Federal cap is \$12.50/hr. The State cap is \$11.50/hr plus \$0.60/hr for medical insurance.

Now may I ask you gentlemen why are you denying the homecare workers of Sutter County a livable wages?

A nickel an hour? Gentlemen, I am embarrassed for you and also ashamed of you.

-Violet Fagan  
Sutter County Homecare Provider