



OHIO SENATE DEMOCRATIC CAUCUS

February 27, 2019

Dr. Tom Mihaljevic
CEO & President
Cleveland Clinic
9500 Euclid Avenue
Cleveland, OH 44195

Dear Dr. Mihaljevic,

Last December, we were encouraged to read that the Cleveland Clinic would raise wages for workers to \$15 an hour. As longtime advocates of the right to collectively bargain for fair wages and benefits, we know this has the potential to lift up local workers and their families and to set an example for employers across our region.

However, it is our concern that the Cleveland Clinic could be setting an example for the wrong reason. While in an op-ed for the *Plain Dealer* you wrote that the Cleveland Clinic recognizes the hard work of health care workers and values "all of our caregivers," a group of those caregivers seems to be excluded from this living wage increase.

In fact, the Cleveland Clinic said that SEIU District 1199 members employed at Cleveland Clinic Lutheran Hospital and Cleveland Clinic Children's will not receive a raise because an ongoing union contract cannot be altered. However, we know that it is common practice for parties to return to the bargaining table after a contract has been signed. For example, workers often renegotiate in times of economic hardship to ensure the financial stability of their organization. Extending the opportunity to renegotiate to union workers when a raise was offered to their non-union counterparts is the appropriate thing to do.

Instead, pay rate discussions for union employees are to be expected when the contract is reopened in 2020. Based on current salaries, this delay represents a collective loss of more than \$300,000 for these caregivers. This is a considerable amount of money for employees who make less than \$30,000 per year. A fair and deserved raise could make a meaningful impact on the day-to-day lives of these workers.

The Cleveland Clinic is a leader in the health care sector, influencing organizations all over the country. Your stance on increasing the minimum wage sends a powerful message in the national conversation about fair wages. We ask that you consider the words you wrote in the *Plain Dealer* about valuing *all* Clinic employees and consider a raise for all caregivers, both union and non-union.

Sincerely,

Handwritten signature of Kenny Yuko in blue ink.

Kenny Yuko
State Senator
25th Senate District

Handwritten signature of Sandra Williams in black ink.

Sandra Williams
State Senator
21st Senate District

Handwritten signature of Vernon Sykes in black ink.

Vernon Sykes
State Senator
28th Senate District

Handwritten signature of Nickie L. Antonio in black ink.

Nickie L. Antonio
State Senator
23rd Senate District