

# **DISTURBING NEWS: THE PORTAGE COUNTY BOARD OF DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES PLANNED TO PUT ITS SERVICE & SUPPORT ADMINISTRATORS OUT ON STRIKE!**

Late Thursday, Portage Co SSAs learned from newly-released Board documents the DD Board HAS BEEN PLANNING THIS STRIKE SINCE JUNE 23! This is nearly 3 MONTHS BEFORE the SSAs took a strike vote & only the day after the 2nd mediation session!!

The Timeline:

1. **August 31, 2016:** The SSA's Contract expires & "negotiations" start on Sept. 28.
2. **January 4, 2017:** The Board demands mediation.
3. **March 30:** First mediation session held. Board leaves after only 25 minutes.
4. **June 22:** 2<sup>nd</sup> mediation session held. The Board leaves less than 2 hours after the session started. Additional mediation dates set for August.
5. **June 23:** The Board is already emailing with Michigan-based Huffmaster about strike "security" and replacement workers! AT THIS TIME, THERE WAS NO TALK OR INTENT OF A STRIKE FROM THE SSAs.
6. **July/August:** Board coordinates with Huffmaster to orchestrate a strike. Meanwhile, the SSAs patiently wait for the next mediation date in hopes of reaching an agreement.
7. **August 28:** 3<sup>rd</sup> mediation session held. Board's team leaves after 3 hours, illegally claiming they "didn't have the authority to bargain or consider the Association's proposals." Board cancels August 30 session.
8. **September 11:** Board issues "last, best offer" knowing it does NOT address SSA concerns, trying to force the SSAs to accept 13 years without a cost-of-living adjustment.
9. **September 14:** With no choice, SSAs vote to issue a 10-day strike notice, hoping the Board will have a change of heart & come back to the table.
10. **October 4:** Refusing to come back to the table, the Board forces its pre-orchestrated strike.

It's clear the DD Board WANTED this strike, rather than continuing to serve the 685 citizens with developmental disabilities of Portage County?

**The Portage County Commissioners & Probate Judge Berger APPOINT & CAN DISMISS the DD Board members. Contact them today to demand that they direct the Board to go back to the table & bargain fairly with the SSAs! They have the authority to do it and are elected by all of us to work for & protect the rights & needs of the citizens of Portage County!**

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## And what about the Board itself?

- Despite multiple offers by our SSAs & an 8-day strike, the Portage Board of DD REFUSES to come back to the table to negotiate a Fair Contract.
- The Board would rather continue paying **out-of-state “security” agents & Board attorney Ron Habowski tens of thousands of dollars** rather than use that money to settle the contract & support the citizens they *claim* to care for.
- The Board has a budget carryover of nearly \$20 million!
- A Fair Contract would only cost a **TOTAL of \$60,000** over 3 years!
- Why does the Board KEEP putting nearly 700 citizens with developmental disabilities at risk? Pride? Greed? Control? A total lack of respect?

**Contact the members of the Board & demand they Come Back to the Table, negotiate in GOOD FAITH with our SSAs for the FAIR CONTRACT they deserve!**

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**Who are the SSAs & What do they do?** *The Service and Support Administrators (SSAs) are the gateway to services through the Portage County Board of Developmental Disabilities. They guide citizens with developmental disabilities & their families who need services, assess individual needs, develop an Individual Service Plan to address those needs, and arrange for & monitor those services and supports.*

*SSAs help consumers and families to navigate the DD system, finding resources available through other agencies (such as Social Security, Medicaid, and other local resources). They are the advocates for consumers and families to help ensure that their needs are met in all facets of life.*

