

New England Jewish Labor Committee

18 Tremont St. Suite 320 * Boston, MA 02108 * 617-227-0888 * bostonjlc@aol.com

www.jewishlabor.org

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October 31, 2008

Board of Directors
c/o President's Office
Beth Israel Deaconess Medical Center
330 Brookline Ave.
Boston, MA 02215

An Open Letter to the Members of Beth Israel Deaconess Medical Center Board:

The Jewish Labor Committee supports 1199 SEIU's and the Area Trades Council's efforts to refocus Beth Israel Deaconess Medical Center on its mission to serve its community, treat patients compassionately, and foster a work environment based on mutual respect and collaboration. We know that patients receive better care when a hospital administration values its workers and treats them with respect.

We are proud of the long history of contributions that Beth Israel has made to the Jewish community and the larger Boston community over the last century. We are also proud of the recent contributions of BIDMC.

Jewish tradition, including religious texts, is clear on the importance of treating workers with dignity and respect. Jewish values are a critical guide to our actions, especially when popular opinion loses its moral compass. As Jews, we are told that as employers we must meet the needs of our workers before our own. This means that the basic needs for a living wage, adequate health care coverage, and dignity on the job come before the profits or large margins of an institution.

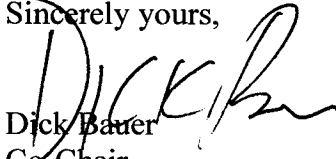
Beth Israel's hostility to unions is detrimental to both itself and its community. Hostility to workers who want to organize a union can create an atmosphere of fear and alienation. Conversely, when management works in cooperation with unions, there is a much higher potential for a cooperative atmosphere. The hospital atmosphere directly affects patient care.

As we all are facing difficult new economic realities, institutions will need *all* their community members to be partners in solving problems. Workers are at the center of


what makes an institution succeed. Welcoming workers' right to decide whether to join together as a union, free from any hint of intimidation or coercion is one step in recognizing the voices of workers, thereby, strengthening an organization in the process.

We call on Beth Israel Deaconess Medical to embrace its original mission of supporting its patients, workers, and community. We also request that the BIDMC rethink its hostility to unionization and reconsider its opposition to remaining neutral in an election campaign.

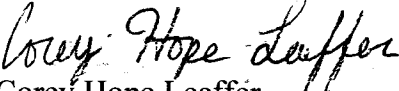
Sincerely yours,




Dick Bauer
Co-Chair




Dave Borrus
Co-Chair



Corey Hope Leaffer
Vice Co-Chair



Don Siegel
Vice Co-Chair



Marya Axner
Regional Director