

December 4, 2009

Dear ALPHA Members, Summit Speakers and Participants,

Two weeks ago the employees of the Sheraton Hotel joined the employees of the Anchorage Hilton in a boycott. Unite Now, the union representing the hospitality workers, contacted me to inform me of this boycott and ask ALPHA to change the location of the Summit. The workers are not on strike, but asking ALPHA to not hold our event at the Sheraton.

The ALPHA board of directors met twice to specifically discuss this request.

Given that ALPHA is a non-profit that operates on a very lean budget, cancelling or moving the Summit would result in a tremendous financial loss. This financial loss could result in ALPHA's ability to survive as an organization and would severely impact the ability to continue its primary mission of the promoting and advancing public health and quality of life for Alaskans.

The Alaska Public Health Association is a non-profit 501 (C) (3) organization for the promotion and advancement of public health and quality of life for Alaskans. We strive to exercise leadership with public health professionals and the general public in developing sound health policy, reducing health disparities and improving health outcomes for Alaskans.

Our constitution and by-laws further define our purpose, among other things:

1. Define and influence public health policies, actions and legislation which affect the health and well-being of Alaskans;
2. Promote and coordinate communications among health and health-related professionals throughout the State regarding their public health concerns;
3. Provide an effective forum for members of the Association and other participants to discuss public health issues, and to identify means by which these issues might be resolved to improve the health and well-being of our citizens;
4. Serve as an information source for the public;

The ALPHA board feels a responsibility to be good stewards of the resources entrusted to us by you, the membership, Health Summit 2009 sponsors, and to honor the many speakers and participants who have registered for the event, prepared a presentation, , booked travel, and are planning to come to Anchorage next week.

We hope you will attend the ALPHA general membership meeting on Monday, December 7 at 5:30PM at the Sheraton where we will discuss this issue further. We also hope you will join us at the Tuesday evening Forum from 6:30PM-8:00PM, in the Sheraton Ballroom to discuss health care issues , one of the central issues of concern for the hotel workers and their Union. .

I look forward to seeing all of you at the Summit.

Sincerely,

  
Sandra Woods,

President-Elect and Summit Chair