**A030C699\_220912S0\_CANON.mp3**

[00:00:08] **Speaker 1** Lucky. Good afternoon, everybody, and thank you for being here today. Here in Wisconsin, when we have a problem that we need to solve, we sit down, we work together. We try to find common ground. We try to find the solution together. Finding that solution requires everybody to actually listen to each other, come together in good faith, give and take, and demonstrated a willingness and a desire to find common ground. Sometimes that might be easier said than done, but it can be done. And today is an example of what happens when it is done. For months there has been a back and forth between UW Health and the nurses that work at their hospital and clinics. But a number of workplace workforce and workplace related issues, including the nurse and nurses, right to form a union. There is disagreement between the two sides and as we all know, a strike was scheduled to begin tomorrow, September 13th. Last week, Wednesday, both sides began mediation through the Wisconsin Employment Relations Commission. It was clear that talking with both Dr. Kaplan and UW Health, in addition to the nurses at UW Hospital, that there was a willingness to try and work together to find a solution that works for everyone as both sides. The end of their third day of mediation, I invited Dr. Kaplan and UW Health as well as the nurses and SEIU to join me at the executive residence to continue working throughout the union. And they both agreed. And we did. We worked well into the night and negotiations continued into the next day. We again met again yesterday at the residence, and the work continued to find a solution. We came to a solution that all parties could agree on. I could not be prouder to have been part of mediation, part of the mediation of this process, and to work with UW Health, SEIU and the nurses at UW Hospitals and Clinic to find a solution that gives greater voice to our nurses in the workplace, strengthens the relationship and the communication between workers and management, and ultimately ensured that the strike would be over. It wasn't easy to find honesty and commitment from both sides to better communicate, and that is exactly what they did over the past two and a half years, our health care system has stressed and endured more than any of us could ever imagine. Tough decisions and sacrifices were made by many so that they could continue to provide quality care to their fellow Wisconsinites who were in need. As the son of a physician and a nurse. I have always valued and appreciated the work of those on health care. But certainly I, like so many others and all I have that love and admiration and respect for respect grow. Since the start of the pandemic. Again, I want to thank Dr. Kaplan and his team, SEIU, Colleen and his fellow nurses for sticking with the process, staying at the negotiation table and working to get this done. Dr. Kaplan, you are no longer.

[00:03:55] **Speaker 2** Thank you, Governor, for all your support and encouragement and leadership through this. We're extremely pleased that we were able to work out an agreement to avert the work stoppage. We said for over a decade that the legal situation does not allow us to recognize a union. I know others have different opinions. This agreement finally sets forth a path to resolve the question once and for all. And I know our nurses, our staff and our entire community are thankful for the partnership of the governor, SEIU, our nurses, and getting a definitive answer to this fundamental question. This not only averts the immediate work stoppage, but also future work stoppages as we go through the process. To obtain a final legal answer on whether UW Health can or cannot recognize a union and collectively bargain. This agreement also provides opportunity for our nurses who have been involved in the organizing effort to engage with leadership working through our existing shared governance system. And I am extremely pleased about that. We all so much want to work together. The last few months have not been easy for anyone involved in this. I want to commend the SEIU and their partnership in moving us toward the definitive resolution. I know that our nurses and our community want to see. I also want to thank the nurses that sat with this mediation and were quite open to having great dialog to help us get to the place we are today. And with that, I'm going to introduce Colin Gillis. He's one of our exceptional registered nurses, like all those behind me. And I would have you come up.

[00:06:27] **Speaker 3** Thank you, Dr. Kaplan. Thank you, Governor Evers. My name is Colin Gillis. I have been a nurse at UW Hospital for five years, where I work on one of the main COVID units. Nurses are tough. We deal with a lot. Every shift, we are there at the bedside to comfort our patients when they are suffering, and we bear witness with family and friends to the tragic circumstances of illness and loss. I take today as a testament to the strength and determination that nurses bring to everything we do. I am so proud of my coworkers. We showed up for our patients in our community through the toughest days of the pandemic, and we've shown up for each other to support one another and build our collective power to improve our working conditions and patient care at UW Health. Today, we celebrate a big step forward. We're excited to work together with the UW administration to solve the challenges we're facing and make sure UW health is the very best place to work and receive care. I have always said that our union in our executive leadership at UW Health ultimately share the same values and concerns. Starting today, we have the opportunity to meet at the table, roll up our sleeves and get to work. Together, we will make our hospitals and clinics the best they can be. I cannot wait to get started with the union. We can build sustainable careers to stay with the profession we love and continue to be there for our patients. We couldn't have gotten to this point without the support of our community, labor leaders and other workers, students and elected officials. We especially want to acknowledge Governor Evers for his leadership in bringing UW health to the table with nurses to facilitate this agreement. He sat at that table alongside us and reminded us that we had to do what was best for the state of Wisconsin. Thanks to his guidance, we were able to reach this historic agreement. His leadership should serve as an example for all elected officials of how they can use their power to make it easier for workers to join together in unions. Today is a historic day, but not just for UW nurses and the people we care for. This moment matters for health care workers and other working people all across the country. When people join together to make things better, everyone wins. And I want to turn back to Governor Davis.

[00:09:39] **Speaker 1** First of all, thanks so much, Colin, and thanks to Kaplan for your good work during these last 60 days before before the strike. And I just appreciate all your good work. But absolutely having gone through negotiations in the past, the good work that people have said they have to find common ground. And I appreciate that everything that's been done so that we'll be glad to answer questions and questions for everyone and express US.

[00:10:16] **Speaker 2** Governor or others. Could you.

[00:10:19] **Speaker 3** Describe the.

[00:10:20] **Speaker 2** Path that's now going to be used to try to.

[00:10:24] **Speaker 3** Arrive at an answer to the question as to whether the hospital can recognize a nurse's union and a union at all?

[00:10:32] **Speaker 2** Yes. Thank you for their question. And let me just start by saying that we've all mutually agreed on a path and it has multiple pieces. And it would probably be best if we had one of our folks meet with you afterwards and lay that out for you. Can you give a summary of the core components? Sure. So the I always wish I had a technical expert with me. The so part of it first will be working through state agency to determine whether UW health is or is not covered by the Peace Act or Wisconsin state labor laws. And from there, we will also seek other venues to answer other questions that are related to voluntary recognition of unions.

[00:11:37] **Speaker 4** Governor, how did you become involved and why did you decide to become involved?

[00:11:42] **Speaker 1** Well, I felt it was important to have both sides meet together. Traditional mediation doesn't always through that. And so this year, I just made an offer to come to the residence, sit down together. And my message was quite clear that people in Wisconsin expect everybody to work together for the best of everyone. And no one wants a strike. No one should want to strike. And we have few days to go down the road. There's obviously a time factor here that tomorrow would have been the day. So we shot first Sunday and that's that's where we ended up. But it was just important to bring people together and to have them communicate directly with each other. And it worked well. Both sides have a great job. Colin, I have a question. The nurses have been.

[00:12:40] **Speaker 2** Demanding that UAW recognize the union. It sounds like you haven't quite achieved that. So what have you achieved through this agreement and why are you happy with the agreement as it is? How does it meet your hands?

[00:12:53] **Speaker 3** Well, as far as the details of the legal procedure, I am going to defer that to one of our experts. But starting this weekend, we have begun serious, meaningful and productive conversations with the UW Health Administration, and that those discussions will continue and there's an element of the agreement that addresses that. So we are starting now, starting already starting yesterday, getting to the table with management and starting to find solutions to it.

[00:13:38] **Speaker 4** It is. Eric, that questions or your question?

[00:13:43] **Speaker 3** Your question, yeah. Dr. Kaplan, can you speak to what factors led you to move from? Absolute opposition to working with the union as we quite good. At least that's what people's experience was to the decision to go through this process at this time.

[00:14:09] **Speaker 2** Yeah. So let me just start by once again, thank you, Governor Evers, for bringing us together. For UW Health, for its board, for its leadership, for the organization. It's always been about the legal question can we or can we not, after Act ten, recognize a union, whether voluntarily or involuntarily, for purposes of representing our employees in collective bargaining? When we came together, we started as we started dialog and sit together. We both recognize that there's even though we have maybe have different opinions on the legal issue. We both recognize we have different opinions and those need to be resolved. But we also all of us, everybody here, everybody what we really care about is patients, our patients, the people we care about each and every day. And so it was easy for all of us to sit down with that focus. And so well, we all agree we have to work through to get legal clarification. We also agree we don't we want to take care of patients. So we want to work hard to get to an agreement to stop this work stoppage and future lives while we're working through this particular set of issues. And the third part is we wanted to be able to come together in a constructive, productive way, focused on patient care issues, focus on work force issues, focus on all those things that we all care about. And so in that regard, that is column was talking about, we were able to find a way that we can bring those that wish to be part of a union to come to the table with us to to start talking about these issues in a in a forum that we can learn together, solved together.

[00:16:34] **Speaker 3** Do things together.

[00:16:37] **Speaker 4** How long do you expect the process of finding out whether or not you can recommend the union to take and call? And what if the answer is no?

[00:16:46] **Speaker 2** So I'll answer the question and then I'll the colonies. And of course I want to know the answer to. And so so the so the first question of whether. So there's two questions. The involuntary and involuntary question. Okay. The involuntary question meaning can get are we covered under the peace act is basically the question that ought to be resolved in a matter of months. Now, when I say that, we will have at least an initial ruling on that, but that doesn't mean either issue the invites for the voluntary issue there. It's possible either party could appeal through the court system, and that is unknown how long that could take. It could take months, two years. But we're all committed to getting to an answer. We can all agree to sort of come.

[00:17:48] **Speaker 3** So I haven't had a chance to thank Attorney General Josh call for his authoritative and exhaustive and very persuasive legal opinion. So now seems like an appropriate time to offer our gratitude. We believe and have always believed and continue to believe that his argument that we are covered under the Peace Act, it answers the question. We anticipate that that's the answer we will get in an official venue like by from the Wisconsin Employment Relations Commission. So as to what happens, I'm not going to make predictions about the future. What we're talking about today is we already are resetting our relationship with UAW health from one of dispute to one of productive conversation. And I can't wait to continue that.

[00:18:49] **Speaker 4** One last question here. Were there any agreements reached relating to making, stopping or any disciplinary actions that you can take?

[00:19:04] **Speaker 3** Are the focus of our grievance is determining the nature of our relationship moving forward. And that's that's what I that's what I'll focus on my answer today.

[00:19:18] **Speaker 4** Thanks, everyone.

[00:19:36] **Unidentified** About the pictures that we put together.