



Media Advisory

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## **Washington Hospital Center RNs to Strike Friday** *Demand Patient Safety Improvements from DC's Largest Hospital*

*AFL-CIO President, former Redskin to Speak at Noon Rally*

*RNs Gather Thursday Evening to Prepare for Walkout*

Registered nurses at Washington D.C.'s largest hospital are preparing to walk out on strike Friday, March 4, citing as their primary concern serious patient safety problems at Washington Hospital Center. The facility's nearly 1,650 RNs are represented by National Nurses United.

The one-day strike begins Friday morning at 7 a.m. Nurses will walk the picket line throughout the day and attend a noon rally featuring AFL-CIO President Richard Trumka, former Washington Redskin Nolan Harrison III, and national and local labor, political, and community leaders. However, WHC says it will engage in a punitive lock-out of the nurses for four additional days, paying hundreds of thousands of dollars to a notorious Colorado-based strikebreaking company, U.S. Nursing Corp.

**On Thursday evening, WHC nurses will meet from 5:30 to 6:30 p.m. at Plymouth Congregational Church, 5301 N. Capitol St. NE for final strike preparations.**

### **STRIKE DETAILS – Friday, March 4, WHC, 110 Irving St. NW**

**STRIKE BEGINS:** 7 a.m., outside hospital, 110 Irving St., NW  
**MAJOR RALLY:** 12 noon, corner of 1<sup>st</sup> St. and Irving St., NW  
**CANDLEIGHT VIGIL:** 5 p.m., outside hospital

In recent days, administrators at Washington Hospital Center and its parent firm MedStar Health Systems have heard from a number of local elected leaders calling on them to negotiate with the nurses for a fair settlement.

In addition to Trumka and Harrison, speakers at the noon rally Friday are expected to include NNU Co-president Karen Higgins, RN; Terence O'Sullivan, general president of the Laborers' International Union of North America; Jos Williams, president of the Metropolitan Washington Council (AFL-CIO); Margaret Shanks, RN, president of the District of Columbia Nurses Association (NNU); DC Councilmember Harry Thomas Jr., and Rev. Graylan Hagler of Plymouth Congregational Church.

Higgins praised the "courageous nurses of Washington Hospital Center for taking a stand for their patients. It is never easy for nurses to strike, but when a hospital refuses to take the steps needed to improve patient care conditions, nurses understand they must act to fulfill their role as patient advocates."