



Shaping the Future of Home Care

**California Association for Health Services at Home**

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### **CAHSAH Annual Conference - San Diego Manchester Grand Hyatt Update**

You may have heard about an issue involving the owner of the host hotel to CAHSAH's 2009 Annual Conference & Home Care Expo in San Diego, May 6-9.

The controversy surrounds Doug Manchester, owner of the Manchester Grand Hyatt, who made a personal contribution in support of Proposition 8, a California State ballot proposition that amended the state Constitution to restrict the definition of marriage to a union between a man and a woman. It overrode a decision of the California Supreme Court from earlier in the year, *In re Marriage Cases*, that had recognized same-sex marriage in California as a fundamental right by overturning the California Defense of Marriage Act. The official ballot title language for Proposition 8 was "*Eliminates Right of Same-Sex Couples to Marry.*" The entirety of the text to be added to the constitution is: "Only marriage between a man and a woman is valid or recognized in California."

UNITE HERE, a labor union representing hotel workers, has been organizing against Mr. Manchester. While the union has added the hotel to its "do not patronize" list, it does not represent workers at this hotel. The Manchester Grand Hyatt is a non-union property and as such there is no official labor dispute. While owned by Mr. Manchester, the Hyatt is operated and managed by the Global Hyatt Corporation, a company with a long history of supporting diversity and good standing within the lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) community. According to hotel management, Mr. Manchester's contribution is a personal decision and neither represents the interests or views of the hotel nor the Hyatt Corporation.

To better learn the facts surrounding this situation, CAHSAH has gathered some information from the American Public Health Association who has communicated with representatives of UNITE HERE as well as the Manchester Grand Hyatt and has compiled background information based on responses from each. A side-by-side compilation of those responses appears in the following Q & A:

#### **What is the background?**

Doug Manchester, a San Diego businessman, donated \$125,000 to an organization supporting Proposition 8, the California State ballot proposition that amended the state Constitution to restrict the definition of marriage to a union between a man and a woman. He is the owner of the Manchester Grand Hyatt San Diego Hotel. The hotel is operated and managed by the Global Hyatt Corporation.

#### **What is the current situation?**

UNITE HERE, a labor union representing hotel workers, has joined with members of the lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender community (LGBT) to organize against Mr. Manchester to protest his recent contribution and to highlight an alleged pattern of discrimination against workers, women and immigrants at the Manchester Grand Hyatt. They are not targeting the Hyatt Corporation; instead they are focusing on Mr. Manchester, the private owner of the hotel.

### **How is Hyatt involved?**

The Global Hyatt Corporation is the management company of the Manchester Grand Hyatt Hotel in San Diego. The protest is not targeting the company, which has a strong and consistent policy of embracing and encouraging diversity in the workplace. The Hyatt Corporation has been given a 100 percent rating on the Human Rights Campaign's 2009 Corporate Equality Index. HRC is the largest national advocacy organization in the United States for the LGBT community.

### **What are the issues at hand from the union and the hotel perspective?**

**UNITE HERE:** Manchester funded Proposition 8 that discriminates against gay and lesbian couples' and workers' right to marry.

**HYATT:** Though Mr. Manchester is the owner of the Manchester Grand Hyatt, he does not speak for Hyatt Hotels & Resorts. Hyatt has a history of inclusiveness and has received a long list of accolades from the LGBT community, including the Human Rights Campaign, Planet Out, Advocate Magazine and DiversityInc.com, for its commitment to diversity and as one of the most respected and admired companies among the LGBT community. Employees at the Manchester Grand Hyatt, as with other Hyatt properties, are offered domestic partner benefits and Hyatt has a strong record of non-discriminatory policies in all Hyatt Hotels, including the Manchester Grand Hyatt.

**UNITE HERE:** Mr. Manchester's personal funding of the initiative is mirrored by a longer record of discrimination against workers, women and immigrants at the Manchester Grand Hyatt.

**HYATT:** Mr. Manchester's personal statements and actions are not reflective of the inclusive, collaborative and diverse culture enjoyed by Hyatt employees. The Manchester Grand Hyatt has an employee base of more than 1,200 people representing 52 countries not to mention an unmatched record of treating its employees fairly and protecting their employment rights.

**UNITE HERE:** Manchester's Hyatt forces housekeepers to clean more rooms than housekeepers at other Hyatt hotels in San Diego.

**HYATT:** Housekeepers at the Manchester Grand Hyatt on a volunteer basis participate in a program that assigns credits to the room based on the level of cleaning required. This program allows housekeepers to work an eight hour day and also provides financial incentives for the housekeeper. Although 98 percent of housekeepers participate and are happy and satisfied with the program, no housekeeper is forced to participate.

**UNITE HERE:** Workers at the hotel do not have a job security guarantee if the property is sold. Some other Hyatt hotels have signed that guarantee to protect their workers.

**HYATT:** Hyatt Corporation has a signed contract with the ownership of Manchester Group Financial that is good through 2030. This contract guarantees that Hyatt and their employees will manage this hotel through 2030 even if the current ownership sells their assets to a new investor.

### **Does the union involvement mean that there is an organized labor dispute?**

**UNITE HERE:** The hotel has been added to the "do not patronize" list by the local labor council.

**HYATT:** There is no official labor dispute at this hotel because the Manchester Grand Hyatt is a non-union hotel. In addition, hotel employees have elected not to join the union.

### **Impact on the CAHSAH Annual Conference**

The Manchester Grand Hyatt is the host facility for CAHSAH's upcoming annual conference. As the second largest hotel on the West Coast, the Hyatt room block accounts for more than 580

room nights reserved for meeting attendees and staff. Education sessions, special events, and the exhibit halls are all scheduled at the Hyatt and cannot be moved.

With more than 400 attendees expected, the CAHSAH Annual Conference & Home Care Expo is one of the largest home care conferences on the west coast.

**What is CAHSAH's response to this situation?**

CAHSAH has been monitoring the situation and has communicated with representatives of UNITE HERE as well as the Manchester Grand Hyatt. While CAHSAH supports LGBT rights and workers' rights, there is no evidence that there has been any wrong doing on the part of the hotel or its management. And while CAHSAH strongly supports the rights of union workers, there is no conflict between the hotel and its workers and the hotel is not a union property. The workers are not organized and have elected not to join the union.

**What does this mean for CAHSAH Annual Conference attendees?**

Since there is no official labor dispute between the hotel and its employees there will be no official actions by Manchester Grand Hyatt employees and no internal impact on the CAHSAH conference being held at the Hyatt. This has also been the experience of other organizations that have used this hotel over the past few months. We cannot speak about the actions of any non-hotel union members or supporters who may express their displeasure outside of the hotel against Mr. Manchester. If this type of unofficial gathering does take place, it must be restricted to sidewalks on public land and cannot directly impact access to CAHSAH attendees, hotel guests or the hotel property.

Thank you for your consideration and understanding of this situation. We look forward to working with our members, attendees, exhibitors and partners during the next few months as we make final preparations for another very successful Annual Conference.

This page will be updated as needed. If you have any questions or concerns, please e-mail [education@cahsah.org](mailto:education@cahsah.org).