

Greg Adams
Chair and Chief Executive Officer
Kaiser Permanente
One Kaiser Plaza, 22nd Floor
Oakland, CA 94612

Dear Mr. Adams,

On behalf of the National Association of Social Workers, California Chapter (NASW CA), the largest professional association of social workers in California, representing thousands of social workers and other behavioral health professionals throughout the state, we are writing to express our serious concerns over the ongoing strike by more than 2,400 behavioral health professionals employed by your affiliated Southern California Permanente Medical Group (SCPMG), who are members of the National Union of Healthcare Workers (NUHW).

For years, our members employed by Kaiser-affiliated medical groups in Northern and Southern California have consistently reported severe understaffing and unmanageable caseloads that prevent NUHW professionals from providing the timely and appropriate care that enrollees are entitled to receive.

Despite repeated calls from NASW CA and other organizations of behavioral health professionals to address these substandard conditions—and following multiple investigations by the Department of Managed Health Care that culminated in a \$200 million settlement, including a \$50 million fine— these issues remain unresolved. Now, only two years after the 2022 strike by Northern California behavioral health professionals, we are witnessing the same concerns in Southern California, where behavioral health professionals have again been forced to strike due to unresolved issues of understaffing, canceled appointments, and reduced vital services. These conditions are having adverse impacts on Kaiser enrollees' access to care.

Considering this history and the extensive documentation of the substandard working conditions SCPMG employees are seeking to address, we urge you to prevent the unnecessary repetition of events in Northern California, resume good faith negotiations with NUHW's Southern California members as soon as possible, and accept the union's reasonable contract proposals to ensure delivery of timely and appropriate behavioral health services to Kaiser enrollees.

Sincerely,



Kimberly Warmasley, MSW, LCSW Executive Director