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Government Contracting and the Unionization of San Francisco's Social Service Nonprofits

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Government Contracting and the Unionization
of San Francisco's Social Service Nonprofits

A THESIS SUBMITTED

by

Jeanne Bell Peters

In Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements

for the Degree of

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Nonprofit Administration

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Government Contracting and the Unionization of San
Francisco's Social Service Nonprofits

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ABSTRACT

This study established baseline data about union activity among San Francisco's nonprofit social service agencies. It examined associations between agency staff size, annual budget size, reliance upon government funding, and the experience of union activity. It further sought to assess executive directors' opinions about factors motivating employees to organize, as well as their opinions about the viability of unionization in the nonprofit sector.

The data demonstrate a strong, positive association between agency staff size, annual budget size, reliance upon government funding, and the experience of union activity. Executive directors of nonprofit social service agencies in this study believe that wages are the most important factor for employees seeking union representation. These managers do not believe that unionization is an appropriate response to employees' grievances and would generally not support organizing drives in their own agencies. While these executive directors view labor organizing as a significant challenge to the nonprofit sector, they tend to believe that nonprofit organizations can ultimately function and thrive with unionized workforces.

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CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

Background

Government funding of nonprofit social service organizations has grown considerably in recent decades; it is now their most significant source of financial support (O'Neill, 1989; Lipsky & Smith, 1989-90). In evaluating this growth, scholars and practitioners have identified a host of associated benefits and risks for nonprofit agencies and the sector as a whole. Benefits include the growth of the sector, the increased availability of services and programs not previously offered by the government, and higher revenue for nonprofits. The identified risks tend to focus on the potential dominance of government in the public/private contracting relationship.

For instance, some are concerned that social service nonprofits are changing their missions and goals to fit government standards and to maintain their eligibility for government dollars. Scholars have termed this "goal displacement" (Gibelman, 1996; Lipsky & Smith, 1989-90). Some argue that contracting has led to the bureaucratization of nonprofits' procedures and management style (Fabricant & Burghardt, 1992; Gibelman, 1996; Lipsky & Smith, 1989-90). And consistently, "resource dependence," or the significant reliance of nonprofits on government contracts for survival,

is identified as a reality for many social service nonprofits and a potential threat. Most scholars agree that whatever the challenges for nonprofit social service agencies associated with contracting, government contracts are likely to continue as their principle funding mechanism (Kramer, 1994).

Today, the increase in labor organizing among social service nonprofits may be seen as a further outgrowth of this "blurring" of the lines between the public and nonprofit sectors (Gibelman, 1996; Pynes, 1997). The public sector has been a key stronghold for unions in the United States in recent decades as the labor movement has incurred substantial losses in the manufacturing and blue collar workforce (Kearney, 1992). John Sweeney, President of AFL-CIO wrote in 1996 about the decline of the labor movement: "From our peak in the mid-1950s, when we represented 35 percent of the workforce, unions declined to 28 percent in the mid-1970s— and now we number only 15 percent of the entire workforce and a mere 11 percent in private industry" (p. 39). It is typically unions that already serve large numbers of public sector workers that are approaching private nonprofits. Pynes (1997) posits that unionization will continue to grow in the nonprofit sector in large part because of its similarity to, and interdependent relationship with, the public sector.

A number of factors are at play in the nonprofit unionization movement. From a union perspective, it is logical to follow the money and jobs that are created and maintained through contracts with nonprofits. A recent study by the Center for Labor Research and Education at U.C. Berkeley found that in San Francisco, for instance, nonprofits received 41.7 percent of all contract dollars spent in FY 1994-95 (Walker et al., 1997, p. 6). Indeed, it has been established that government contracts accelerate the budgetary and personnel growth of voluntary agencies (Lipsky & Smith, 1989-90; Stone, 1996). At the same time, as protectors of public sector jobs, unions may pursue nonprofit unionization as a way to counter the tide of privatization by increasing nonprofit wages. For the tens of thousands of public sector workers that unions represent, contracting is a form of privatization which may lead to job insecurity (DeHoog, 1984; Sweeney, 1996).

Like privatization, managed care is a cost containment practice that has some providers in the health and social services fields deeply concerned. Pynes (1997) and others view managed care as an impetus for public and nonprofit sector professionals and paraprofessionals to organize. In this case, non-monetary issues are often in the forefront—issues that pertain to the quality of physical and mental health services provided in a managed care environment.

There are also various personal and organizational reasons that social service providers are seeking union representation. Existing research suggests both monetary and non-monetary motivations for them to organize. Some researchers argue that management changes in response to the aforementioned issues (contracting, privatization, and managed care) are negatively impacting direct service providers' job satisfaction (Fabricant & Burghardt, 1992). Some see a logic in social service organizing based upon the early unionizing of social workers in the 1930s as well as the tendency of social service providers to share labor's historic commitment to advocacy and social action (Karger, 1989).

On the other hand, there has been only minimal research about the nonprofit *management* perspective on unionization. Do nonprofit social service managers view unionization differently than corporate or public sector managers do? We don't yet understand nonprofit managerial views of unionization and its potential impact on the nonprofit sector. There is considerable debate about why social service providers unionize, and further, whether it is appropriate for them to do so given the nature of their work. Issues of professionalism and the impact of strikes by social service workers are of particular concern to researchers and practitioners.

Statement of the Problem

There is very limited research on the unionization of nonprofit agencies. Pynes (1997) suggests that this is partly due to the relative newness of their option to organize. The National Labor Relations Board (NLRB) began considering voluntary agencies as potential bargaining units in 1976 (Pynes, 1997, p. 356). Whatever influences they may experience from their multiple constituencies, public and otherwise, nonprofit agencies should be studied categorically to gain understanding of their unique position vis-a-vis unionization.

At this preliminary stage in our understanding of the issue, a two-pronged question presents itself. Why are unions approaching nonprofit social service agencies? And, why are nonprofit service providers seeking union representation? Much of the related literature suggests that government contracting is part of the answer to both questions. It may be that nonprofits are attractive to unions because of their financial relationship with the widely unionized public sector; and in turn, that unions are attractive to service providers at least in part because of the monetary, managerial, and programmatic implications of that same public/private partnership.

No published research that the author is aware of has addressed nonprofit agency directors exclusively as the

subjects of an inquiry about unionization. In addition to establishing the scope and any discernible patterns in the union activity among the organizations they lead, this study asks them to characterize, from their personal perspectives, the motivations of staff and union organizers, and the opportunities and challenges that unionization presents the sector. Moreover, while there is considerable literature addressing the ways that government contracting has changed the roles and functions of nonprofit managers and boards (Heimovicks, 1993; Stone, 1996), there is none that specifically establishes whether nonprofit managers are prepared for the significant change that unionization represents.

In sum, the problem is to begin the work of establishing some baseline data about the frequency of union activity among nonprofit social service organizations, and to understand any patterns therein— especially those that may relate to public/private partnerships. Further, the research is concerned with management's preparation for, and opinions of, labor organizing in the sector.

Normative Definitions of Relevant Variables

This study focuses on social services. Margaret Gibelman (1996) defines these as " services oriented to preventing, ameliorating or resolving problems which afflict

individuals, families, specific groups or communities" (p.26). She further quotes research by Wellford and Gallagher in which they describe social services as " those which assist in the growth and development of individuals and families" (p. 27). DeHoog (1996) argues that " social services" is a broad category including " hard" and " soft" services ranging from transportation to family counseling respectively (p. 15). The organizations included in this research fall along DeHoog's continuum, and as Gibelman suggests, in some way address an individual or group problem.

This study is concerned with public/private contracting relationships. In Contracting Out for Human Services, DeHoog (1984) writes:

The general term contracting out refers to the practice of having public services (those which any given government unit has decided to provide for its citizens) supplied either by other governmental jurisdictions or by private (profit or nonprofit) organizations instead of delivering the service through a government unit's own personnel (p. 3).

Within that definition, the study addresses the contracting relationships of private nonprofits and any governmental unit at any level: city, state, or federal. This definition is synonymous with what some scholars refer to as purchase of service contracting, or POSC.

Research Questions

The related literature and a small number of scholarly research studies focused solely on social service nonprofit unionization inform the following research questions:

- What is the scope of union activity among social service nonprofits?
- Is there a tendency for organizational similarities among agencies experiencing union activity?
- Is there a relationship in the social services between receiving government contracts and experiencing union activity?
- Is there a relationship in the social services between receiving government contracts and an executive director's perception of staff and union motivations for union organizing?
- Is there a relationship in the social services between receiving government contracts and an executive director's degree of preparation for labor drives in currently nonunionized organizations?
- What are executive directors' opinions of the impact of unionization on nonprofit human service organizations? Do those opinions differ among executive directors of unionized and nonunionized social service agencies?

Importance of the Study

The relationship between government and social service nonprofits is a primary focus of researchers of the voluntary sector. O'Neill (1989) terms it the "classic policy issue for social service nonprofits" (p. 108). As that relationship has become more complex and increasingly characterized by profound interdependence, scholars and practitioners have attached a variety of meanings to it while anticipating advantages and disadvantages for both consumers and service providers. It is important to investigate whether unionization, a thriving staple in the public sector for many years now, is a further result of the increasing interdependence between the two sectors.

On a practical level, unionization may pose challenges for nonprofit managers. It is unclear how they respond to it and what impact it has on their roles and functions as directors of nonprofit social service agencies. Over the last 20 years, executive directors have had to acquire a skill set previously never imagined in their roles. Their functions now typically include service contract negotiation, quantifiable outcomes measurement, and complex financial accounting. Unionization will demand yet another knowledge base. Researchers, practitioners, and educators in the social services and nonprofit administration fields will

need to have a clear understanding of this impact if unionization becomes a mainstay in the voluntary sector.

CHAPTER TWO: REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

The literature review examines the potential for viewing the emerging trend of labor organizing among nonprofit social service organizations in the specific context of the prevalence of public/private partnerships. To that end, research and theory that identify aspects of the contracting relationship that present organizational challenges which may be associated with employee job satisfaction, and therefore unionization, are first discussed. The review then addresses literature concerned with labor organizing in the social services and like fields. Herein, the issues of the appropriateness of social service worker organizing, striking, and employee and labor union motivation are considered.

The Organizational Risks Associated with Government Contracting

Kramer (1994) writes that the predominance of service contracting has "meant that nonprofit organizations function more often as a substitute for government rather than in their traditional roles as an alternative, a supplement, or a complement" (p.34). According to the author, the public/private partnership exacts a set of costs

from the nonprofit that directly affect its workplace environment:

The transaction costs to nonprofit organizations who serve as vendors of public services can be grouped into four clusters: various time constraints such as 'annualization' and multiple, conflicting deadlines that contribute to uncertainty and other job pressures; underfunding and cash flow delays; reporting, red tape, paperwork, and other accountability requirements; and undesired restrictions on staffing, client eligibility, and service methods. (p.41)

Each of these implications of service contracting potentially causes conflict for, and between, managers and direct service providers. Kramer maintains that the complexity of multiple contracting relationships " is one of the major factors militating against coherence, continuity, coordination, and planning, which are the basic elements of a more rational service delivery system." (p. 46)

Specifically, Kramer identifies increased size and scope of services, as well as bureaucratization, as trends that have emerged among nonprofits along with contracting. However, he cautions that the extent of their association is not known. Kramer notes that larger organizations relying on government contracts tend to decentralize into a variety of separate programs each responding to a specific contract or contracts. Conversely, contracting's impact on smaller

organizations is centralization, which allows them to withstand the administrative, or indirect, costs of being a contractor.

Kramer cautions against mythologizing the old days when nonprofits were supposedly more informal, reminding the reader that many nonprofits came into existence in direct response to government funding. Still, he writes that "the policy environment poses a serious challenge to many nonprofit organizations: how can they avoid becoming just another public agent and a substitute for government? How can they preserve their traditional roles as alternatives, supplementing and complementing public services" (p. 54)?

In "Contracting Out for Social Services: Boom or Bust for the Voluntary Sector?" Gibelman (1996) also raises a series of concerns about the potential impact of contracting on both nonprofit managers and service providers. She names "long-term overload and burnout of staff, loss of valuable staff and disruption of operations" as possible repercussions of the schedules and procedures associated with the contract funding process (p. 34). A variety of funding sources can mean multiple accountability requirements for staff, which means more paperwork. Gibelman argues that the added staff requirements associated with contracting "raise the possibility of creating new 'mini-bureaucrats' rather than eliminating bureaucracy" (p. 35). Certainly burnout and bureaucratization are factors that

could negatively impact social service providers' job satisfaction.

Lipsky and Smith (1989-90) claim that the blurring of the lines between the government and nonprofit sectors has made the latter less attractive to social service workers. They believe that many older nonprofit agencies have "lost the edge that set them apart from public organizations and other nonprofit agencies" due to reliance on contracting (p. 117). And, they ask, "Why should a social worker continue to work for a nonprofit agency when she can increase her salary by 20 percent working for another type of organization" (p. 117)? The authors argue that employee loyalty to social service nonprofits is detrimentally impacted by nonprofits taking on public sector characteristics. Nonprofit management has always been able to counter the disincentive of working for lower salaries by distinguishing the quality of nonprofit work from that in any other sector. The loss of that distinction could be an impetus for union organizing as lower salaries seem less justified to nonprofit workers.

Melissa Middelton Stone's (1996) case study of a nonprofit's transformation from the 1950s to the 1990s highlights the significant influence of government contracting. She recalls Alford's (1992) concept of "orbits," or what she names "institutional logics." During the 1950s and 1960s, the organization's orbit is

" democratic" because it responds solely to its members, volunteers, and clients. But as it takes on more and more government contracting, the nonprofit inevitably takes on the logic of the " state" as well. Stone concludes:

The point here is that CARC became embedded in a contracting system that rewarded managerial sophistication. Becoming a significant contractor within this system, however, also produced tension within CARC concerning its ability to continue client advocacy efforts, the central founding purpose of the organization (p. 83).

Struggling with organizational goal definition can be a source of conflict for direct service providers especially because their work is the daily enactment of that mission. In The Welfare State Crisis and the Transformation of Social Service Work, Fabricant and Burghardt (1992) delineate changes for social service workers resulting from public/private partnership. Based on in-depth investigations of three nonprofit social service agencies, the authors cite a more routinized work day, a greater emphasis on numbers of clients seen, ethical dilemmas, increased paperwork, less creativity in service development, and staff turnover as negative ramifications of government contracting. The authors maintain that these ramifications are leading to " a deepening crisis" of a less qualified labor pool. Workers' responses to " an increasingly alienating work environment

have cumulatively resulted in substantial labor flight" (p. 179).

DeHoog (1984) writes of a different sort of risk associated with contracting, namely, raising the ire of public sector unions. She notes that a number of municipalities throughout the country have been slowed in their efforts to contract out by union opposition. " When governments decide to switch from public employees to private firms, union leaders accuse the offending agency of union-busting and putting public employees on welfare" (p.14). Pynes (1997) goes further, arguing that professional employees in both the public and nonprofit sectors seek unionization in response to the impact privatization, of which contracting is a part, has on the delivery of social services (p. 358).

To summarize, scholars have identified a number of characteristics and results of the contracting relationship that can be seen as risks for social service nonprofits in a unionizing environment. These risks include bureaucratization, staff burn-out and turnover, a loss of distinction between work in the public and nonprofit sectors, goal displacement, and unionization.

Considering the Appropriateness of Unionization
in the Social Services

Piazza and Frost (1993) question whether union membership is an appropriate response for nonprofit employees. They are concerned with the implications for the professionalism of nonprofit counselors particularly. "The dual role of professional counselor and union member may place the mental health counselor in a conflict of interest" (p. 193). The authors worry that when mental health counselors are combined with nonprofessional staff in a bargaining unit, "decisions . . . may be guided by collective interest rather than by client welfare or professional ethical standards" (p. 194).

Piazza and Frost also suggest that the image of professional counselors may be tarnished by union membership:

Because mental health professionals are usually not part of management, they risk losing their professional identity by aligning themselves with labor . . . Mental health professionals would be wise to note the loss of prestige and professional stature experienced by teachers and nurses once they began to unionize (p. 195).

Hush (1969) shares the concerns of Piazza and Frost. He notes that social service workers tend to be sympathetic to

the theory behind organized labor, but he questions whether that theory is applicable in the environment of social service. "Problems arise . . . when a philosophical, humanitarian view of workers' rights, which evolved from the needs of employees paid by the hour in an industrial, profit making enterprise, is applied to the collective bargaining process involving salaried personnel in a nonprofit community service enterprise . . ." (p.210). Hush maintains that once the "adversary relationship" is established through unionization, "it is never fully absent" (p.211). Finally he notes the shift in authority within a unionized nonprofit away from the board of directors to the ratified union contract (p. 212).

In contrast, Karger (1989) calls the idea that social workers are somehow different from other workers, "exceptionalism." This exceptionalism implies that tasks performed by social workers are vastly more important than those performed by other workers— especially nonprofessionals (p. 8). He maintains that the notion of social work as unique has kept salaries in the field lower than in other professions. Karger refutes exceptionalism, concluding, "for most social workers, the appellation of 'worker' is more of a reality than the preceding 'social'" (p. 9).

Milton Tambor (1973; 1988; 1995) identifies a host of reasons that unionization is appropriate in the social

service field. First, he views organizing as a way for direct service providers to impact policy and procedure in their organizations. " In many agencies, negotiating wages, hours, and working conditions, logically leads to the use of collective bargaining to effect changes in administrative policies and improve client services" (1973, p. 44). Access to decision-making power is critical for Tambor; he notes that " in some instances, negotiations provide the initial opportunity for employees and board members to meet each other" (1973, p. 43).

Tambor also views social service work and unionization as philosophically compatible. " As trade unionists, social workers can find expression for their political commitment and values within their unions" (1988, p.95). He argues that unions share providers' interest in the causes of social work clients. " Social workers can use their labor organization's resources to improve client services and join in progressive coalitions with the neighborhood and community groups" (1988, p.95).

Finally, Tambor sees collective bargaining, either voluntarily in nonunionized social service settings, or among unionized agencies, as a necessary weapon against employment at will. He notes that while most nonprofits have personnel practices that delineate a grievance process, " in nearly every case, the process is limited to internal appeals within the agency, with no opportunity for an

impartial third-party hearing" (1995, p. 48). He uses four case studies to illustrate the potential for nonprofits to terminate employees without just cause. In three of the four instances, unions successfully appealed terminations and employees were reinstated.

Alexander, Lichtenberg, and Brunn (1980) found that overall social workers themselves do not view unionization as inappropriate for their field, but they do narrowly define their relationship with organized labor. The researchers surveyed 84 union members with masters degrees in social work in a major urban community. Only 38 percent of the respondents perceived any conflict between their roles as professionals and as union members. But fewer than 25 percent of the respondents looked favorably upon slowdowns, sick-outs, and strikes. The authors conclude: "The respondents overall strongly favor the most moderate of union tactics— arbitration— and strongly disapprove of the more forceful and traditional tactics" (p. 222). Because she anticipates the growth of nonprofit unionism, Pynes (1997) assumes a pragmatic stance on the appropriateness of organizing:

Whether or not one believes that nonprofit employees should be able to organize and collectively bargain over wages, hours, and working conditions is irrelevant. Nonprofit administrators must become familiar with the federal legislation governing labor

relations as well as understand the reasons why many nonprofit employees become union members (p. 356).

Social Service Workers and Strikes

The disapproval of striking that Alexander et al. (1980) found among MSW respondents speaks to the ambivalence many providers and managers feel about the notion of work stoppage when vulnerable clients are dependent upon the services in question. Reamer (1988) writes that "social workers have always struggled to reconcile their principal concern about clients' welfare and their right (or need, perhaps) to strike" (p. 136). He articulates the argument against striking: "It would be unconscionable for social workers to betray the poor, mentally ill, infirm, abused, and neglected in order to advance their own interests" (p. 136). Reamer provides the other side of that argument as well. "The presumption of altruism invites managers to take advantage of social workers' benevolent instincts. To counter such temptations, social workers must retain the right to strike . . ." (p. 136).

Fisher (1987) examines the ethical considerations of striking social workers. She writes about a 1984 strike in New York City that involved more than 50 agencies and included all of the social work staff in hospitals and nursing homes. During that strike, the author maintains,

striking social workers heckled clients and their families who crossed the picket line; many strikers did not alert their clients to the pending work stoppage; and neither the union nor the striking workers addressed the continuation of care for clients anytime during the 47-day strike (p. 253).

Fisher argues that social service workers in unions should be concerned with their own job security when they consider striking. In the case of the strike in question, managers cut back on social work staff after surviving without many of them for seven weeks, she notes. Moreover, Fisher maintains that it is "time for the profession to develop a position that places patient care services as a priority" and that "standards of professional behavior conflict with union membership requirements" (p. 254).

In their discussion of unionized mental health counselors, Piazza and Frost (1993) also advocate placing clients' well-being in the forefront. "The client, whose welfare is the highest priority, seems to have the least to gain and the most to lose in the unionization process. Clients risk disruption of services" (p. 198).

McConnell's (1982) case study of a Canadian youth residential program that experienced a labor strike suggests possible implications of disrupted services in a nonprofit social service organization. The author makes the argument that in work with vulnerable populations, replacement workers of any kind are at a serious disadvantage. This is

because social service work is based to a significant extent upon ongoing relationships between service providers and clients. In the case of this residential home for children, "control, credibility, and influence" were extremely difficult for replacement staff to establish. McConnell concludes: "Preparation for the strike underestimated the effects of abruptly terminating existing relationships. Experienced child care staff members did not realize the extent to which their professional effectiveness was related to their personal impact on the children" (p. 514).

The Motivations to Unionize

The absence of a substantial body of literature on the motivations of social service workers in the nonprofit setting to unionize necessitates some inclusion of relevant public sector studies in this review. The organizing of public sector social service workers is viewed as potentially relevant because nonprofit workers are often joining the same unions as government employees doing similar work.

In "The Experience of Unionizing for Circuit Court Psychologists in Chicago: Teamsters Local 743," psychologist Catherine Wilson (1997) writes that issues of caseload and management style, along with salary, were paramount in the organizing of this small group of professionals. They

proposed nontraditional items for consideration in the contract negotiation process: shared control by staff and management over use of staff training funds; a requirement that supervisors be experienced in the work of their supervisees; and a weighting system for assigning caseloads to prevent an excessive number of difficult cases going to any one psychologist (p. 432). Wilson concludes that the experience " has shown that through union organizing, individuals can make a significant impact on their work conditions and the quality of services they offer the public" (p. 434).

Another psychologist, and union member of AFSCME Local 3758 in the District of Columbia, Stephen Fitzgerald (1997) argues that unionization is an effective way for direct service providers to gain access to policy makers and decision makers. " As a union president, I have the credibility to speak with city leaders and others in order to express the views of our psychologist members. I am on the invitation list for many functions that I would otherwise be excluded from" (p. 436). As a union, these psychologists have also collectively addressed client welfare issues such as library closings and the termination of an employment training program for their clients.

Petty and Odewahn's (1982) research of public sector workers in a human service agency suggest that non-monetary issues are most important to workers in this field. Their

study of 169 people employed as social workers and assistance payments technicians " indicates that attitudes toward factors like the nature of one's work, the goals of the agency, and the agency's strategies for obtaining its objectives may be the best predictors of union membership in human service agencies" (p. 58). The authors hypothesize that the level of professionalism among these workers explains their greater emphasis on issues other than salary. " One implication of the results of the present study is that employees in human service agencies may seek union membership in pursuit of increasing the level of intrinsic satisfaction with their work" (p. 59).

Hovenkamp's (1994) research with unionized and nonunionized librarians also suggests a valuing of the intrinsic aspects of job satisfaction. She asked respondents questions pertaining to three areas of job satisfaction: " bread and butter," which refers to salary and benefits; " professional growth," which refers to challenge and career development; and " work environment," which refers to the quality of the people and facilities at their place of work. Hovenkamp found that the existence of a union had no significant relation to how workers valued each of the three elements. However, within the unionized group she found that commitment to union membership was positively associated with valuing professional growth. Arriving at a conclusion similar to that of Petty and Odewhan, Hovenkamp states:

Because of their educational training and nature of work, issues of intrinsic value may be as important for professional workers as those of extrinsic value. The present research moreover showed that those members who expressed the strongest ties to the union also tended to place higher values on professional issues" (p. 991).

Scott, Seers, and Culpepper (1996) researched the success of union elections in the nonhospital health care industry. Nonprofits such as home health care agencies and nursing homes were represented in the study. Previous research established that in hospitals, professional groups were the most likely to have election victories. The findings of Scott et al. confirm that professionals in nonhospital health fields, including nonprofits, also have a higher probability of union election victory. Again, this speaks to professional concerns motivating nonprofit organizing in service settings.

Tambor (1988) writes that social worker unions (representing public and nonprofit employees) are concerned with pay equity and job protection as well as less traditional issues. He lists possible professional development contract items including "tuition reimbursement, sabbatical and educational leaves, conference time and costs, payment for professional dues and subscriptions, and flexible hours of work" (p. 92). With

regard to agency policy, Tambor suggests that employees may seek to address workload issues and staff participation in decision making through unionization (p.93).

Pynes (1997) argues that nonprofit managers' strategic attention to human resources issues is required to address the motivations to organize. She draws upon a 1990 work by Pfeffer and Davis-Blake, "Unions and Job Satisfaction: An Alternate View," which identifies four human resource challenges that may foster union activity. These challenging situations are: when staff feel a lack of autonomy, when they experience poor supervision, when there is too much interpersonal conflict in the workplace, and when management makes substantial new work demands on staff (p. 368). Pynes suggests that nonprofits need to change their tendency to "administer personnel in an ad hoc manner, making it up as they go along" (p. 368). "Whether or not workers join unions depends on their perceptions of the work environment and their desire to influence employment conditions. Organizations that provide employees with the opportunity to participate in the decision-making process are less likely to be the targets of unionization" (p. 368).

"A House Divided: How Nonprofits Experience Union Drives," a qualitative study by Masaoka, Peters, and Richardson (1998), supports Pynes' assessment. The authors identify four "areas of argument" in the unionization process: staff voice in decision-making, agency management

strategies (especially human resources), wages and benefits, and the political and racial context of the labor drive. They write, " For pro-union staff, a desire for greater involvement with agency decision-making was the most frequently articulated reason for their pro-union stand" (p. 14). The study further suggests that the perceived mismanagement of human resource issues is also a major motivational factor for staff organizing. Although wages and benefits were discussed by the study's participants, nonbread-and-butter issues appeared to provoke the most passionate responses among pro-union staff.

Masaoka et al. (1998) also include the voices of union organizers in their study providing insight into the unions' motivations to organize. Organizers speak openly of the relationship between government contracting and nonprofit unionization. As one study participant said, " [Nonprofit organizing] is to balance out the discrepancy between public and nonprofit. A two-tier system is evolving. The only way to stop that is to organize both tiers." Another nonprofit organizer explained how the union evaluates interest from nonprofit workers: " When workers call us up, our first question is, 'How big are you?' and then, 'Where does the money come from?' Then we ask if other workers are in agreement." While these comments suggest a clear agenda on the part of unions organizing nonprofit workers, it is not clear that the employees seeking representation share that

agenda, at least initially. In fact, very few workers who participated in the study referenced government contracting as explicitly as the union staff did.

Conclusion

Reviewed together, the literature addressing the potential impact of government contracting on nonprofit social service staff, and that addressing the motivations of social service employees and labor organizers to unionize, suggest the possibility for overlap in the way we consider the two issues. If employment factors such as burnout, goal conflict, and professional development are linked with a contracting environment and with the motivation for social service employees to unionize, then further research that looks at the issues concurrently is warranted. Moreover, if, as Pynes (1997) and the participants in the study by Masaoka et al. (1998) suggest, unions are targeting nonprofits because of that same public/private partnership, then establishing nonprofit management's awareness of, and perspectives on, labor's focused attention is equally warranted.

CHAPTER THREE: METHODOLOGY

Respondents

Surveys inquiring about the level of union activity and management's knowledge and perception of organized labor drives among social service nonprofits were sent by US mail to 329 executive directors in San Francisco during March, 1999. The sample was culled from an 890-record active mailing list called BRAIN, or Bay Region Agency Information Network. The list is maintained by HELPLINK, an information and referral program of the Northern California Council for the Community, Inc. BRAIN is a regional database of health and human service organizations serving San Francisco County that includes executive directors' names and brief descriptions of agencies' services. Because the present study addressed nonprofit social service agencies exclusively, the researcher excluded 561 organizations: government agencies, educational institutions, and other organizations that did not fit this study's definition of "social service."

Research Design

The survey was a four-page, 16-question instrument. It was mailed with a cover letter explaining the purpose of the

research. The cover letter appeared on the Support Center for Nonprofit Management's (subsequently renamed, CompassPoint Nonprofit Services) letterhead due to the researcher's collaboration with that local technical assistance organization on other projects related to unionization. A postage-paid envelope was included for returning the survey.

Because agency names were not solicited on the survey instrument, a handwritten number was placed on each survey before it was mailed for the purposes of tracking returns. This allowed the researcher to follow up with those agencies that did not respond. One hundred and one completed surveys were returned during the allotted timeframe, with six surveys returned undeliverable.

On April 15, 1999, three weeks after the initial survey distribution period, a reminder postcard was sent to agencies that had not responded to the initial mailing asking that they return the survey and offering contact information should they have misplaced it. Twelve more surveys were received, bringing the total to 113, or 35% of the targeted population.

The relatively low return rate is not unexpected and may be attributed to several factors. First, the data collected suggested great variety in the levels of awareness of the issue among agencies. While some have had union activity already or are very active in the political/funding

circles where the issue is currently being debated, others have had no reason to encounter the topic and may not have believed it relevant enough to warrant their efforts. Secondly, the topic is a controversial one among those who are aware of it. The fact that several respondents tore the identifying number assigned to their surveys off the document before returning it despite assurances that a participant list would never be shared publicly, speaks to the anxiety level of some managers. In a time of active recruitment by labor organizers, the notion of sharing budget and staffing information as well as opinions about unionization may have seemed too risky for some executive directors. Finally, the nature of the questions generally, from degree of reliance on varying funding sources, to the knowledge base of one's board of directors, simply may have gone beyond what some executive directors were inclined to share.

Procedures

The researcher developed the survey questions. A pretest of the survey to check for clarity and effectiveness in capturing data was conducted with five San Francisco executive directors and management consultants. Collected data was entered into the SPSS statistical program for

analysis. Analysis, drafting of findings, and revisions took place between August, 1999 and August, 2000.

Instrumentation

The survey instrument contained three types of questions: organizational characteristics, assessment of union activity, and subjective questions about the respondent's knowledge of, preparation for, and opinions about nonprofit unionization.

Organizational characteristics, questions 1 through 4, included: the size of the agency's annual operating budget given in ranges; the size of the agency's paid staff given in ranges; the ratio of master's-degreed/licensed staff to bachelor's-degreed or less; and the source of the agency's funding. For the last question, respondents were asked to put a budget percentage next to each funding source type (fee for service; individual, foundation, and corporate; city and other government; and other) adding up to 100 percent. These responses were used to explore patterns among unionized organizations based on these characteristics.

Questions 5 through 8 assessed the level of union activity, if any, at the responding organizations. The options allowed the author to capture the various stages of this emerging movement among single and multi-program agencies. This was critical because there is variation among

agencies experiencing union activity. Some large nonprofits are only partially unionized, some agencies are negotiating their first contract, and some have been unionized for many years.

Questions 8 through 11 addressed the likelihood of future organizing and the level of preparedness of executive directors and their boards of directors for that possibility. Respondents were asked to rate their knowledge of nonprofit union issues and that of their boards of directors on a Likert-style scale. Directors of nonunionized agencies were also asked if they were having conversations about unionization with their staffs. In question 9, respondents from nonunionized agencies were asked to rate the likelihood that their organization would experience a labor drive within the next two years on a Likert-style scale.

Question 12 addressed the existing or potential motivations for employees to organize. Executive directors were asked to rate how important they believed each of six factors were, or would be. These factors included wages, pay equity, decision making power, and quality of supervision.

Question 13 asked executive directors to agree or disagree on a Likert-style scale with six statements pertaining to nonprofit unionization. This question gathered the opinions of executive directors about the appropriateness of unionization, government contracting as a

union motivation, and the future impact of organizing on the social services.

The last structured question, number 15, reflected the researcher's aforementioned partnership with the Support Center for Nonprofit Management (now CompassPoint Nonprofit Services), asking executive directors what kinds of technical assistance would help them address current or potential union activity at their sites.

Finally, in question 16, respondents were encouraged to write additional thoughts or concerns about the issue. These were reviewed to complement and reinforce the collected data, and appear unedited in Appendix A.

Operational Definitions of Relevant Variables

To examine any relationship between the government's contracting out to nonprofits for human services and unionization activity, the extent of each organization's public funding was determined. The following nominal categories captured reliance upon various funding sources: fee-for-service; individual, foundation, and corporate contributions and grants; public contracts with the city, state, or federal government; and, other. These all represent standard funding language in the nonprofit sector.

Other factors considered were each agency's overall budget, and the size and degree-level of its paid staff.

Budget meant a total annual operating budget. Staff size referred to the number of paid part-time and full-time staff that an agency employed. Master's/licensed referred to those staff who have a master's degree and/or a license to provide specific social services such as counseling or therapy.

Subjective questions used non-technical language to determine executive directors' knowledge base regarding unionization, their level of preparedness for future organizing, and the respondents' opinions of the impact of unionization on the nonprofit social services sector.

Treatment of Data

First, to provide a snapshot of the level of union activity among San Francisco's social service nonprofits, percentages of responses were computed for social service nonprofits experiencing union activity and those already unionized. A primary inquiry of the research was whether or not the higher the percentage of public money a social service nonprofit received, the higher the likelihood that it had experienced union activity or been unionized. For this purpose, categories suggesting any level of union activity were collapsed. Cross-tabulation of union activity and government funding data established the level of association. Pearson's chi-square was utilized to test significance.

Union activity data was compared with each of the three additional organizational characteristics being considered (budget size, staff size, and degree level) using cross-tabs. Pearson's chi-square tested significance. This established which, if any, of the factors had the strongest association with union activity at social service organizations in San Francisco.

The remaining responses allowed the researcher to capture the extent to which executive directors are discussing potential unionization with their staffs, their perceptions of employee concerns that could lead to union organizing, and their personal beliefs about the potential impact of a unionized nonprofit workforce. These responses were discussed with percentages and measures of central tendency including mean and variance.

Finally, any relevant narrative comments were quoted anonymously from the surveys to capture the opinions and concerns of executive directors in their own language, enriching the quantitative analysis.

Limitations of the Study

There were three primary limitations to this research. First, the research instrument did not ask nonprofit *employees* themselves why they are, or are not, seeking union representation. The research was designed to capture a

management perspective. Questions regarding staff motivation for union organizing were included, but the fact that executive directors were making the assessment allows for a management bias. However, regardless of accuracy, what executive directors believe to be the motivations for labor organizing will have a significant impact on their response to the issue.

A related limitation stemmed from having executive directors as respondents. It is possible that some executive directors were unaware of pre-election union activity at their agencies. Employees may have been meeting with union representatives off-site or in secret; or, some executive directors may have preferred to conceal pre-election activity hoping it was insignificant and would not lead to anything. Also, there was the political and highly sensitive nature of the subject matter; to what extent this factor influenced the survey responses of nonprofit executive directors is unknown. This could be especially true for those agencies that rely significantly upon city contracts for survival. Overall, relying upon executive directors' assessment may have led to under-reporting of current and potential union activity among social service nonprofits.

Finally, this study focused on San Francisco exclusively. Because of the city's history of supporting unions and its significant reliance upon nonprofit organizations to deliver essential social services, the

results may not be generalizable to other communities. While other major cities such as New York and Los Angeles are currently experiencing similar labor movements, this study reflects the economic and political environment of San Francisco's social service nonprofits.

CHAPTER FOUR: RESULTS

Basic agency descriptors such as staff and operating budget size were considered as potentially associated with the likelihood of union activity. The majority of the social service nonprofits in the study had small staffs. Fifty-nine percent had staffs of fewer than 25 people, while just 11.5 percent had staffs of more than 100 people. The extent of professional staff (defined as having a Master's degree and/or professional license) was limited. For 65% of responding organizations, advanced degree holders make up of less than 25% of the staff.

Table 1

Size of Paid Staffs among Participating Agencies

Staff size	Frequency	Percent	Cumulative percent
25 or fewer	67	59.3	59.3
26 to 50	17	15.0	74.3
51 to 100	16	14.2	88.5
101 or more	13	11.2	100.0

N=113

The annual budgets of most participating agencies were substantial. Forty percent of the respondent agencies had annual budgets in the \$1,000,001 to \$5,000,000 range, and 65% of respondents' budgets were between \$500,001 and \$5,000,000.

Table 2

Size of Annual Budgets Among Participating Agencies

Annual budget	Frequency	Percent	Cumulative percent
\$250,000 or less	13	11.5	11.5
\$250,001-500,000	12	10.6	22.1
\$500,001-1,000,000	28	24.8	46.9
\$1,000,001-5,000,000	45	39.8	86.7
\$5,000,001 or more	15	13.3	100.0

N=113

Scope of Union Activity

Of the 113 reporting agencies, 24, or 21%, had experienced union activity; 15 were completely or partially unionized; 4 were experiencing a unionization attempt; and 5 had rejected a union. That unionization was present to such a considerable extent is a significant finding in itself.

This is a topic just now drawing focused attention from nonprofit scholars, the media, and practitioners.

Moreover, 40% of executive directors of nonunionized agencies believed that there was some likelihood of labor organizing at their site within the next two years. There were 91 valid responses to the question regarding perceived likelihood of future unionization. Sixty percent of the executive directors believed that a unionization attempt within their agencies was not likely at all. Of the 40% who did believe that unionization was a possibility, 31% thought it was somewhat likely, 7% thought it was likely, and 2% thought it was very likely.

In addition to this baseline data, any relationship between the aforementioned organizational characteristics of staff and budget size and the experience of union activity among the responding organizations was explored. The variables of staff size and budget size were each cross-tabulated with union activity. For this purpose, union activity data collected from survey questions 6 and 7 were collapsed: any organization that was unionized, going through an organizing drive, or that had rejected a unionization attempt was considered to have experienced union activity.

The Pearson's chi square yielded valid significance levels of less than 0.05 in each case. Agency size was recoded into three groups: staffs of 25 or fewer, 26 to 50, and 51 or larger. Cross-tabulation of this recoded variable and union activity found that 50% of cases experiencing union activity had a staff size of greater than 50 people, while just 19% of cases not experiencing union activity were as large. In this case, one cell, or 16.7%, had an expected value of less than 5. This falls within the acceptable range (20% of cases or fewer) thus eliminating "small sample size" as a reason to accept the null hypothesis. Pearson's chi square established a significance of 0.001, and the null hypothesis was rejected.

Table 3

Cross-tabulation of Staff Size and Union Activity

Union activity	25 or fewer	26-50	51 or more
No	61	11	17
Yes	6	6	12

Pearson chi-square 0.001
N=113

Also significant was the association between annual budget size and union activity. Budget data were similarly

recoded into three categories: \$500,000 or less, \$500,001 to \$1,000,000, and \$1,000,001 and above. Cross-tabulation of these variables found that none of the agencies that had experienced union activity fell into the smallest budget category of \$500,000 or less; whereas 28% of those organizations with no union activity had annual budgets of less than \$500,000. Moreover, 79% of agencies that had experienced union activity were in the largest budget size category, compared with 46% of those organizations with no union activity. Pearson's chi square established a significance of 0.004, and the null hypothesis was rejected.

Table 4

Cross-tabulation of Annual Budget Size and Union Activity

Union activity	\$500,000 or less	\$500,001 - \$1,000,000	\$1,000,001 or more
No	28	23	41
Yes	0	5	19

Pearson chi-square 0.004
N=113

These associations are in line with expectations. It is logical that labor unions would be more likely to organize agencies of a size sufficient to provide them with enough

members to make their effort and expense worthwhile. Further, larger staffs— carrying out the more complex initiatives that large funding typically entails— can be expected to identify collective grievances and make more formal demands for change.

The Role of Government Funding

The primary hypothesis proposed in this study was that a significant reliance upon government funding by social service agencies would make them more likely to have experienced union activity, and further, may influence their executive directors' preparation for and opinions about labor organizing in the nonprofit sector. The literature supported these theories in several ways. First, many researchers believed that government contracts negatively impacted the service provider's experience by mandating lower nonprofit salaries (Karger, 1989), bureaucratizing work procedures (Fabricant & Burghardt, 1992; Kramer, 1994), and causing "displacement" of organizational goals (mission) not necessarily in line with acquiring and maintaining public dollars (Gibelman, 1996). These factors could inspire nonprofit social service workers to pursue

union representation as a means of addressing their dissatisfaction. Equally important, the literature suggested that unions have a growing incentive to organize the nonprofit sector because of saturation of the government labor market and the interdependence of the public and nonprofit sectors (Pynes, 1997; Masaoka et al., 1998).

In order to establish relative degrees of reliance on government funding among the respondents, answers to question 4 were recoded into three groups: organizations without any annually budgeted government funding; those with 1% to 50% government funding; and those with 51% to 100% government funding. The variables of government funding and union activity were cross-tabulated. Although 20 nonunionized respondents (22.5%) received no government funding, none of the organizations with union activity fell into this category. Pearson's chi square yielded a significance level of 0.013, and the null hypothesis was rejected. The data suggest a strong association between reliance on government funding and experiencing union activity.

Executive directors of nonunionized agencies relying on government funding were also more likely to be preparing for the possibility of unionization by talking with their staffs

about the issue. Only 17 executive directors (18%) of nonunionized cases had talked with their staffs about the possibility of a union drive. Each of these agencies had some reliance on government funding. More than half of them were in the 51% to 100% group. Conversely, more than half of those executive directors who had never talked about unionization with their staffs had budgets consisting of 50% government funding or less. These findings were established through cross-tabulation of the two variables, government funding and discussion with staff, which yielded a Pearson's chi square significance level of 0.026. Overall the small number of executive directors talking with their staffs about the potential for labor organizing is noteworthy given that 40% of these respondents believed that a labor drive was a possibility within the next two years.

Table 5

Cross-tabulation of Government Funding and Union Activity

Union Activity	<u>Government funding proportions</u>		
	None	1-50%	51-100%
No	20	37	32
Yes	0	9	15

Pearson chi-square 0.013
N=113

As Stone (1996) and other scholars have established, government funding is often inextricably linked to nonprofit agency growth, both in terms of staff size and annual budget. Therefore, in considering the characteristics of staff size, budget size, and government funding in relationship to unionization, some caution is warranted. To a significant extent, these three characteristics overlap each other, so it is inaccurate to isolate them in any discussion of union activity. That is, while there is a strong statistical association in this study between reliance upon government funding and the experience of union activity, there is no proven expectation that if there had been numerous *small* agencies with significant government funding that they would have a high incidence of union activity. The literature supports considering the impact of growth (size) and government funding in an interrelated fashion, and thus these findings are considered.

Executive Directors' Opinions About Nonprofit Unionization

This portion of the survey instrument asked executive directors to respond on a 7-point Likert-scale to a series of statements about nonprofit unionization. The questions

assessed knowledge levels about the issue, perceived motivating factors for staff organizing, and management beliefs about unionization's impact on the nonprofit sector. The objectives were two-fold: to establish baseline data about nonprofit management perceptions of the issue, and further, to determine if a reliance upon government funding influenced those beliefs.

Executive directors view themselves as more knowledgeable about nonprofit unionization than their boards of directors. They rated their own knowledge at 4.04 (mean) out of a possible 7, while rating their boards of directors at 3.15 (mean). This may be due to the frequency with which nonprofit board members work in the for-profit sector; as such, they have even fewer opportunities than executive directors to gain exposure to the issue without actually going through a nonprofit union-organizing drive themselves. This finding speaks to the level of preparation among nonprofit leaders for potential organizing in the voluntary sector. A proactive, board-supported stance on unionization is unlikely given low levels of awareness about the issue among decision makers.

Executive directors were next asked to rate the relevance to staff of seven possible motivating factors for

union organizing: wages, wage differential between staff and management, employee benefits, quality of human resources/supervision, voice in decision making, wage differential between government and nonprofit workers, and wage differential between staff due to varying contracts/funding sources. The purpose of this inquiry was to establish if executive directors' views are in line with the existing literature about why nonprofit workers organize, and to determine if executive directors of unionized agencies had significantly different opinions based upon their first-hand experience.

The literature suggested that social service workers may seek less traditional kinds of gains through labor organizing than their for-profit counterparts, but in rating possible motivating factors for staff organizing, executive directors gave the highest rating to the factor of "wages" with a mean score of 5.36. "Wages" also had the smallest variance of any factor, suggesting a relative uniformity of thought among participating executive directors that wage levels are the most important factor in nonprofit organizing. The second highest rating was a tie between "wage differential between staff and management" and "employee benefits," with mean scores of

4.62. However, there was a larger variance on the "employee benefits" factor (3.10) than on "wage differential" (2.80). These three factors constitute the most traditional, or "bread and butter" factors presented. It is noteworthy that nonprofit executive directors believed them to be the most important to staff in the nonprofit sector as well.

Respondents rated "quality of human resources/supervision" a relatively high score, at a mean of 4.55, but the variance was high as well at 3.30. This suggests a significant number of responses at the extremes, and a real variety in executive directors' opinions about the motivational value of this factor. The fifth highest-rated factor was "voice in decision-making" with a mean score of 4.40 and a variance of 2.95. These factors were considered to be less traditional; they are in line with the views of researchers such as Karger (1989) and Tambor (1988) who suggest their particular relevance for social service workers. There appears to be less agreement among executive directors about the role these non-monetary issues play in staff organizing.

The lowest-rated factors were wage differential between government and nonprofit workers, and wage differential between staff due to varying contracts/funding sources, with

means of 3.91 and 3.40 respectively. Of particular interest is the low rating for variation between government and nonprofit workers, because this appears to be a key factor motivating unions to approach nonprofits. It is unclear whether respondents are unaware of this issue, or whether they believe that nonprofit workers are not as motivated by it as the unions who organize them.

Table 6
Executive Directors' Opinions of the Factors
Motivating Staff to Unionize

Factor	Mean rating	Variance
Wages	5.36	2.32
Management wages	4.62	2.80
Benefits	4.62	3.10
Human resources	4.55	3.30
Decision-making	4.40	2.95
Government wages	3.91	3.79
Varying funding	3.40	3.12

Respondents were next given seven statements about unionization and asked to agree or disagree with each on a Likert-style scale of 1 through 7, with seven meaning

strongly agree. Overall, executive directors believe that union organizing issues are unique in the nonprofit sector, compared to organizing in the for-profit and public sectors. When it was stated that nonprofit organizing issues are essentially the same as those in the for-profit and public sectors, executive directors responded with mean ratings of 3.03 and 3.17 respectively. But, when it was posited that the issues were unique to the nonprofit sector, the mean response was 4.83. The intent of this line of questioning was to establish if managers believe they can simply borrow from what has already been learned about labor organizing from the private and public sectors, or whether to some real extent, this emerging movement will require its own understanding. Managers appear to believe the latter.

Of key interest in this study was executive directors' attitudes about the role of government contracting as a motivating factor for unions approaching nonprofits. The statement they were asked to respond to was the following: "Government contracting is a significant motivating factor for unions organizing nonprofits." The responses varied widely. While the mean rating was 4.16, the variance was 4.12, the highest variance for any question in this section. Moreover, 13 people did not answer the question at all, also

the highest for any question in this section. This suggests the possibility that the statement was misunderstood by some participants. Overall, there was the sense among respondents of a connection between government contracting and a given agency's appeal to a labor union, but it was by no means uniform.

There was a noteworthy dynamic in the responses to the three statements dealing with whether unionization was an appropriate response to grievances by nonprofit workers, and whether nonprofits can thrive or will be severely challenged in a climate of labor organizing. Though executive directors overwhelmingly disapproved of organizing as a means to address grievances— the mean response was 2.96— they were not entirely pessimistic about unionization's ultimate impact on the sector. To the statement, " Nonprofits can function and thrive with unionized workforces" executive directors gave a mean response of 4.15. This suggests that although they may not welcome organizing, quite a few managers believe their agencies can adapt, if not benefit. Nonetheless, executive directors anticipate unionization as a serious challenge to the sector. To the statement, " Nonprofits will be severely challenged by unionization," the mean response was 5.12. Some respondents

apparently believed that these two statements were not mutually exclusive; nonprofits may be severely challenged by organizing drives, but will eventually function and thrive.

Next, executive directors of nonunionized nonprofits were asked how they would view an organizing drive in their own agencies. On a Likert-type scale with one meaning "strongly oppose" and seven meaning "strongly support", executive directors gave a mean response of 2.99. This was essentially the same as the mean response to whether unionization is an appropriate response to staff grievances (2.96). Overall, executive directors tend not to look favorably on staff organizing and would not support organizing in their own agencies.

Table 7

Executive Directors' Views of Unionization and Its Impact

Issue	Mean	Variance
Unionizing appropriate response to grievances	2.96	3.01
NPOs can thrive with unions	4.15	3.63
NPOs will be severely challenged by unions	5.12	3.44
Support for union in own agency	2.99	2.97

The final question on the survey allowed respondents to provide any additional thoughts they had on the issue of nonprofit unionization. Thirty-six executive directors (32%) elected to write in their views. Appendix A is an unedited listing of all of their responses. The narrative comments tended to reflect their disapproval of organizing, as quantified in Table 7. In further explaining their disapproval, executive directors cited factors such as low regard for unions and their tactics, distraction from the important work of their agencies, the inability to reward good workers and discipline those who are performing poorly, the limitations of funding from government contracts and other sources in response to union salary demands, and potential service cuts.

Many comments reflected executive directors' belief in their personal responsibility to create an environment that is not susceptible to unionization. The following was typical of this sort of response: " But I hope to never see the day when my staff call for a union, for this will mean that I have failed to create a purposeful, fair, supportive, and open community in my agency." Another executive director wrote: " We decided to instead create structures

that are very democratic within the organization and include complete openness on financial matters to all staff."

Discussion of negative union tactics and union irrelevance in nonprofits and elsewhere was also common among the narrative comments. Several executive directors singled out local union shops organizing nonprofits in San Francisco. Service Employee International Union (SEIU) locals 250, 535, and 790 were each mentioned negatively. Among these responses, nonprofit union organizing was described as "a power grab" and as "corrupt." One executive director of a unionized nonprofit wrote: "There was so much fear due to threats and harassment— you would be put out of business, etc. Phone calls at your home at night."

But other managers viewed unionization as a positive force for change in the nonprofit sector and described the organizing process as valuable. "The process was not difficult and proved to be a helpful process to achieve employee agreement around policies, procedures, and work rules," wrote one executive director. Another noted that unionization is "in line with our vision and mission." And one executive director accused the researcher of issuing a biased survey:

We here are pro-union. This survey assumes, in my opinion, that union organizing is a negative factor. I have encouraged our staff to unionize. No staff have researched organizing yet, but the Board and I would be supportive if they did. We see it as a way to gradually improve our work environment in a reasonable and non-threatening way.

The narrative commentary of the participants enhances the quantifiable data, fleshing out their varied and complex reactions to unionization. Pro-union or anti-union, there is an intensity in their remarks that reveals a passionate set of expectations about the nonprofit social service sector and how it should be regarded by its workforce and the community at large.

CHAPTER FIVE: SUMMARY OF CONCLUSIONS

Review of the Problem

The objectives of this study were to establish preliminary baseline data about nonprofit social service unionization, to explore any potential relationship between labor organizing and reliance upon government funding, and to examine nonprofit management views of the issue. These objectives were regarded as significant for several reasons.

First, there is no existing baseline data on nonprofit unionization because the standard collectors of data about the sector have yet to include labor organizing in their collection procedures.

Second, in some regions of the country, organized labor is already a key player in the complex environment that nonprofits must navigate. Though there is little current scholarly research on the topic, the issue of nonprofit unionization sits at the convergence of some of the key strategic challenges facing the sector. What is the relationship of nonprofits to the public sector and the political elements associated therewith? More specifically, what are the evolving implications of the financial

interdependence that contracting engenders? And within that context, how does the nonprofit sector distinguish itself from government and business to attract and retain a quality workforce as well as the support of its myriad constituents? The presence and interest of unions magnifies the urgency for nonprofit managers to have ready answers to these questions.

Third, without investigation, it may be assumed that nonprofit managers will respond to unionization in a fashion similar to that of their for-profit and public sector counterparts. In fact, this may not be the case. Attempting to understand the potentially unique opinions of nonprofit managers was believed to be important in the early stages of this movement.

Review of the Findings

In summary, there were organizational similarities among agencies experiencing union activity: they tended to be larger in staff size and to have larger annual budgets than those not experiencing union activity. There was a significant positive association between degree of reliance upon government funding and the experience of union

activity. The frequency with which the factors of staff size, annual budget size, and degree of reliance upon government funding are interdependent— as has been noted by scholars and union organizers— was considered. Together, these variables may be viewed as associated with an increased potential for union activity.

Although 40 percent of nonunionized agencies see some likelihood that they will experience a union drive in the next two years, their level of preparation appears negligible. Very little discussion of the issue is happening between management and staff. Moreover, executive directors do not view their boards of directors as particularly knowledgeable about the issue, which suggests that boards are not playing a key role in developing proactive agency stances on unionization.

Executive directors view the "bread and butter" issues of wages and benefits as the biggest motivating factors for staff organizing. Although they gave relatively high ratings to the non-monetary factors of human resource management and voice in decision making, these ratings were lower than those for monetary concerns and had higher variance.

Finally, executive directors appear to strongly disapprove of staff organizing as a means to addressing

grievances. They generally will not support organizing drives in their own agencies, and they overwhelmingly view unionization as a severe challenge to the sector. Yet, they are nonetheless modestly optimistic that nonprofits can function and thrive with unionized workforces.

Recommendations for Future Research and Action

Because of the potentially fundamental changes that widespread nonprofit unionization represents for the nonprofit social service sector, this research suggests areas for further investigation as well as necessary adaptive actions for practitioners.

Research: Establish and Maintain Sector-wide Statistics

There is an urgent need to capture unionization statistics in the nonprofit sector as a whole. We do not currently understand the issue on a national level the way that business and government do. Ongoing data collection that looks at numbers of employees, types of agencies, which unions are involved, and similar baseline information should be undertaken immediately. Particularly as the composition

of the health and human services fields change through nonprofit mergers and extensive contracting, continuous updating of this information will be critical to understanding organized labor's impact throughout the sector.

Research: Assess Unionization's Long-term Impact on
Nonprofit Culture

There is virtually no research on what impact unionization has on an agency's culture after the challenges of the organizing drive itself. Does the "adversary relationship" (as Hush called it) linger indefinitely, or are agencies able to re-establish, or establish for the first time, a cohesive approach to their missions? This will be a key issue in the recruitment of both management and non-management staff. To date, there has been a perceived uniqueness in working in a nonprofit culture that serves as a beacon for professionals who value a mission-driven, team approach to providing services. Do the confines of a union contract lessen the distinction of the nonprofit culture, or does the employee ownership derived from organizing an

agency actually increase the team approach to service delivery?

Research: Assess the Impact on Nonprofit Services

It will be critical to assess unionization's impact on the primary consumers of nonprofit services: the usually disadvantaged clients who typically know and care little about the behind-the-scenes management and funding of the agencies upon which they rely. It would seem almost inevitable that the time and energy required by service providers to implement unionization, from inception of the idea through negotiation of a first contract, would detract from the resources they can afford their clients. How high is this toll; and, is there a means by which management can contain it? Also, will higher nonprofit salaries won through labor organizing mean service cuts, either because nonprofits cannot afford to maintain staffing levels, or because government may view nonprofits as less attractive contract partners? Or will higher wages, and gains in nontraditional areas such as staff training and decision-making, as proposed by some scholars, improve the quality of services provided? This would appear to be the most

important research of all: to assess whether the unprecedented array and quality of society's work now accomplished by the voluntary sector can be maintained, or even enhanced, in a union environment.

Action: Build Sector-wide Knowledge and Awareness

The data collected for this research suggest a wide range in the awareness and knowledge levels of social service executive directors and board members. Part of the price of the incredible growth of the sector is that executive directors and boards cannot afford to be insular or antipolitical. Those with leadership positions in the sector should be mindful of the causes and implications of organized labor's interest in nonprofits, whether their own agencies have experienced it firsthand or not. While nonprofits have been collaborating for years in service delivery, there is now a need for nonprofit leaders to forge their own "organizing" to share information and gain understanding of the opportunities and threats that affect the sector as a whole.

Action: Management Education About the Unionization Process

For those executive directors and boards currently facing union organizing and those who have any risk of facing it in the future, it is critical to be educated about the legalities and procedures of the unionization process, including the laws that govern management's activities and responses during a drive, the required steps leading up to an NLRB-sanctioned election, the strategies for contract negotiations, and so on. Since management typically does not have knowledge of organizing until the employees/union representatives are well into their planning, being savvy about what the entire process entails is essential. This awareness may also lessen the frequency with which management responds to the steps of the process with raw emotion rather than professional strategy.

A corollary of this suggested action is the recommendation that those institutions that educate and support nonprofit managers must expand their curricula and perspectives to be relevant in an environment that includes unionization. This means that consultants and educators in the human resources, organizational development, and legal

arenas must keep themselves up-to-date on the topic. It further means that they can play a crucial role in defusing the explosive nature of the issue by encouraging management preparation. Only prepared managers will be able to respond early and effectively— whatever that may mean for a particular organization— to staff organizing.

Action: Value Human Resource Skills

Perhaps the most fundamental action suggested by this research is that sector leaders value human resource skills. Where there was an existing need, as Pynes (1997) suggested, to improve the way nonprofits administer human resources, there is now a mandate. Boards of directors and executive directors must seriously evaluate managers' skills in leading and motivating people. Establishing and maintaining lines of communication throughout all levels of staffing, enabling staff development, and providing effective supervision should be viewed as equally important as a manager's service-related skills.

The findings of this study suggest that nonprofit executive directors may be missing the message being sent by their unionizing employees. Whereas the literature

demonstrates that nonprofit professionals may seek union representation as much for non-monetary reasons as monetary, executives claimed that wages and benefits were the primary motivational factors. This disconnect raises the question of how well executive directors understand their employees' work, and just as importantly, their employees' perceptions of their workplace. Without the ability and desire to monitor their employees' job satisfaction, not simply agency outcomes, executive directors are at a serious disadvantage when labor unions are eager to respond to the call of disgruntled and disillusioned nonprofit employees.

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APPENDIX A

Narrative responses to survey question 16: " Please share any additional thoughts you have about nonprofit unionization. Your comments will remain anonymous." These comments appear in full and are unedited.

" I have no knowledge of unions in the nonprofits, but was an office steward in my union many years ago while working in the for profit field. Unions are created by workers who feel disenfranchised and alienated from the products of their work (labors). I would not want a worker on my staff who did not feel ownership in the 'end-product' (i.e.- elimination of some forms of human suffering). Nor, would I want a worker who was not willing to participate in a community- itself designed to pull together for a common cause. Anyone looking for extrinsic awards need not apply with us. The only inequity I see at this point is the disparity of my salary to my Assistant Director's (nearly 2x hers). However, I worked here for many years for less than she is making. And, our salaries have only been upgraded through my hard work of bringing in new funding sources. I work at least 20 hours a week more than anyone else on my staff. My salary is equitable for the hours I work."

" We had a union, local 535 of SEIU, at our agency about 10 years ago. My experience was that it was extremely detrimental to the agency as it pitted line staff against management, embittered employees who had not voted for the union but were required to pay dues, thereby distracting from their work with emotionally disturbed children. A union is not necessary in an agency such as ours considering that our funding from State and local governments does not cover the costs of the important work we do. The union withdrew in 1989 due to downsizing of our staff."

" For small nonprofits, I'm not sure how unionization can help. Either you have the money or you don't. Either you have dialogue or you don't."

" As a rapidly growing agency, unionized over 10 years ago, we find our staff are not particularly interested in the union and do not understand how it works. It is not management's job to explain the union to staff- but it means our workforce don't understand their rights and responsibilities."

" I'm not against unionization as a rule because I know of some very badly run agencies that need a union to kick their butts. But I hope to never see the day when my staff call for a union, for this will mean that I have failed to create a purposeful, fair, supportive, and open community in my agency."

" One of the problems faced by unions is the lack of credibility of SEIU local 250, the likely union to hit nonprofits in San Francisco. Their reputation as corrupt is well-known."

" Unionization may be more than most nonprofits can handle, particularly those which are church based. In many cases, programs would be sacrificed in order to meet compensation standards established by unions and the spirit of 'mission' and voluntarism compromised."

" We were unionized last year (1998). The process was not difficult and proved to be a helpful process to achieve employee agreement around policies, procedures and work rules. The reason we were targeted for unionization was the failure of the E.D. Poor management invited in the union."

" Please note that there is a difference between the union shops with respect to benefits and interaction amongst staff, management, Board and community. One only hopes that staff consider this in selecting a union if they unionize. I fear that they will only consider the shop approaching them and that they are unaware that they can choose a union."

" Fifteen years ago as this organization was founded, we did discuss whether staff should unionize to protect workers' rights. We decided to instead create structures that are very democratic within the organization and include compete openness on financial matters to all staff. When staff feels wages need to be reviewed or raised, the entire staff is included and the decisions are made by consensus."

So far, our organizational structure has worked so well that unionization would likely have no support among our staff since it would not offer them anything they do not already have."

" Unionization usually occurs when staff have lost confidence in management or have lost confidence in management's interest in or ability to look out for the interests of the workers."

" The problem with unions in nonprofits is that they usually get organized during times when an agency is having trouble. Once the agency gets back on track- the issues that caused staff to go to a union don't matter and the union becomes a place for problem employees to go for support rather than an advocacy-oriented entity. The union here does not offer much to employees and I would be willing to do more for employees if there wasn't a union. Rewarding good work is hard as the parity issues are so evident amongst union employees that you have to reward everyone and many don't merit it. It is quite arduous at this point due to the way in which problem employees 'use' the union."

" Unionization has been very positive at our agency. It is in line with our vision and mission as an agency. Unionization has unified the staff, created strong leadership, and has afforded the staff a formal voice."

" Need to have unions understand the complexities of contractual budget constraints re: nonprofits. Unions tend to polarize staff and create a division between management and rank and file workers. Many nonprofits will be forced to downsize and negatively affect clients who need the services. It will be devastating for poor, elderly and minority clients for nonprofits to become unionized."

" Unionization is particularly traumatic for small nonprofits. It is difficult for a single union to represent the interests of both professional and clerical employees."

" If the employees of a nonprofit are considering unionization, then 1) management and 'the workers' have poor communication; and/or 2) wages are low; and/or 3) management is poor; and/or 4) staff is listening to 'radical voices.' Obviously, I am not for unionization, however, if the

employees are considering unionization, I think it is a symptom of poor management."

" I do not fear unionization. We try to treat all staff fairly, to compensate equitably; to be mindful of disparities; to pay what the market and personal skills of the employee demand; and to encourage participation in decision-making. If the staff decided to unionize I would feel I had failed in creating a fair and vibrant workplace. I would not attempt to hinder unionizing efforts and I would encourage the Board not to interfere."

" In our agency's experience, Top Management has defended our employees rights much more than the union. For example, creating a Retirement Plan and proposing an improved wage scale plan with education incentives to our Board. The union Rep is virtually always unavailable. Unions could be very helpful in demanding more money from funding sources but many unions' management is weak and not truly committed."

" I think carrying out any of the above services [nonprofit technical assistance re: unionization as described in question 15] will be difficult to do and convey at least the appearance of impartiality. Any appearance of opposing unions (and if you do not favor their cause you will be painted as opposing it) will bring a powerful reaction from them."

" We acquired SEIU 790 in a merger. There were several attempts at organizing the nonunion staff of the merged organization, but it was unsuccessful. Having a union restricts management's ability to give incentives to staff. I don't feel they are appropriate for nonprofits."

" There is significant exploitation of nonprofit staff by many nonprofit managers that I have observed— poor wages and poor treatment of staff (e.g. making staff members type up letters for a friend of the executive director). I believe that these issues need to be addressed by managers and staff. However, if staff are paid at least average wages and good benefits, and given staff development opportunities and flexible hours (as we do in our office) then unionization could potentially damage the flexibility nonprofit managers demand to run programs based entirely on funding. Our annual budget is \$150,000/year and we pay all

staff \$27,000/yr and up plus full health and dental benefits (even for 20 hour per week staff) and provide 3 weeks vacation in the first year, and 4 weeks every year thereafter. At this rate, we have only a minimal amount left over for admin and overhead costs. If staff were to demand higher salaries, we would probably have to cut people's hours or positions entirely to avoid going out of business. We never have any guarantees about any of our funding, and although we devote a great deal of time to fund-raising, it is impossible to predict what will happen in the economy, and who will be running the Presidency/Congress, all of which affects our funding. Nonetheless, as Director, I need to always make sure not only that there is sufficient funding to maintain current staff, but also enough to give annual raises."

" There was so much fear due to threats and harassment- you would be put out of business, etc. Phone calls at your home at night. Why was this omitted?"

" SEIU 790 needs to be confronted as to why they're relentless in targeting NPOs for unionization. We've been left alone to do our work, especially fill in gaps when civil service just cannot fill those service gaps. We're set up to address issues and concerns of our community and we should be regarded as partners with government to address emerging needs from emerging populations/communities, particularly those who have been traditionally left out. 790 should leave NPOs alone to do their job without harassment and forcing a creature (like unionization) on NPOs and using the City's, Mayor's, and Board of Supervisor's offices to do their bidding. It creates a hostile environment. It divides staff and management who usually work as a team to combat community problems, now easily and adversely affected by fear of unionization. Unions, especially 790, are given unfair advantages over NPOs because they're used to lobbying the City officials but NPOs are service and client oriented and are not used to lobbying activities. 790 should be asked to back off from targeting NPOs and creating an atmosphere of fear, hostility, and anxiety among Eds and Boards of Directors who have enough other challenges to face without having to allocate limited agency resources to fight off unionization."

" We here are pro-union. This survey assumes, in my opinion, that union organizing is a negative factor. I have

encouraged our staff to unionize. No staff have researched organizing yet but the Board and I would be supportive if they did. We see it as a way to gradually improve our work environment in a reasonable and nonthreatening way."

" I fear that for smaller, struggling NPOs, unionization would shut us down. The business of unions is unions, not client service or community development. It seems to me that unions are in direct opposition to the mission of many smaller NPOs. Also, the benefits offered by many NPOs are often better than many corporate organizations— yet nonprofit staff don't realize it or seem to get it. A comparative study might help."

" I have lots of experience with for-profit unionization issues. I don't believe there is a great deal of difference. Communication between staff and management is key in prevention."

" Unionization of nonprofits is essentially a power grab by unions to retain union members. The numbers of union members have been steadily decreasing over time. Health care/nonprofits is an area that has not been strongly unionized in the past. In my opinion, unions have no functional purpose in business. Originally the fight for workers rights, pay etc. was valuable. Today unions promote mediocrity because seniority is the only factor for considering promotions, layoffs, etc. It is also extremely difficult to discipline poor workers because union stewards often make a manager's life miserable for even bringing up the issue. Unions also do not improve wages or benefits despite their advertisement of such. Union members pay high dues and lose money on strike that is often never recouped for years. Health care is a business that unions have no business in. Nurses and doctors striking put patient care at risk and cost hospitals thousands of dollars in lost revenue. Hospitals are also put at great risk for licensing, etc. due to impaired patient services. In an era when clinical services are being consolidated due to decreasing reimbursement, some communities would be without clinical services during a strike."

" Staff seems to not trust unions. Their joining fees and membership fees are very expensive. Most staff feel they will not balance out. Net wage retention could be smaller."

Staff is poor and of color; they do not believe white administration of unions will support them in a show-down."

" My sense is that unionization is a pressure where the staff has very similar to identical duties, skills and disparate pay rates with unionized workers in the for profit or government fields."

" Our agency is so small that we probably would not be affected. We have only 4 paid employees including myself and we do not accept federal, state, or city funding."

" If there was union activity at our nonprofit I do believe I would find other employment. Strictly on a personal level- my philosophy is life is too short to have to deal with the extra stress of union organizing in the nonprofit workplace. In this economy and in my field of chronic care management/long term care, there are plenty of opportunities in the for-profit sector as well as the nonprofit sector to explore. I spend a good deal of my time raising money for special projects, general agency support and managing relationships with government entities with which we contract. We have always operated on the premise of providing a workplace that provided the best pay we could manage, good benefits, flexible work schedules and investment in training the staff on skills they need in our workplace and in the workplace of the future. However, there can be demands that are quite unreasonable given the budget restrictions of most nonprofits. And there is a misperception of 'how good' the salary and benefits are in the private sector. Most staff miscalculate the total salary package because they do not factor in the cost of benefits (this is especially true of government employees who never factor their rich retirement packages into their total compensation package- a benefit package that generally runs over 30%). Unions are at the crossroads at this time. Traditional manufacturing jobs have left the country and we are moving towards an information economy. They have been targeting government and nonprofits as the most likely places to organize and the least likely to employ anti-union tactics used by the private sector. Sad because they miss key issues entirely: our economy is dramatically changing and services that used to be in the domain of government and nonprofits are rapidly being taken over by better financed private companies. I will stop now. We have not had any discussion of union activity at our nonprofit to my

knowledge. Typically we discuss how to retain staff from being raided by the private sector. Perhaps we have made everyone just a bit too employable."

" I've decided- whether a union drive happens or not- that the best place not to be during a union drive is in an Executive Director role. Even with no strong conviction for or against unions, the process itself sounds painful and destructive and with little long term for potential to benefit an agency like ours."

" We have only 2 staff members, so this issue of unionization seems moot."

" I am against all unionization!"

" We try to keep communication open to all our workers especially about funding. Our practice has been to offer a strong benefits package as well as raises when we get one from our contract or have savings (in restricted funds and can modify our expense budget) and pass those on to staff. The message we give is that if the agency gets money, we pass it on to staff."

" If nonprofits are to be unionized, existing unions would not be suitable for that challenge or purpose. Unions as we know them now are too highly politicized and are much more concerned with the good of the employee as opposed to the good of the consumer and/or client. I firmly believe that a new unionization type of effort that works for the good of both would be absolutely necessary. We are making great strides in that regard without the benefit of unions!"

APPENDIX B

Directions: Each question has instructions for you about how to respond. There are questions on both sides of each page. Please put your completed survey in the enclosed stamped envelope and mail it back to us within two weeks. If you lose the envelope provided, mail to: Support Center, Attn: Union Study, 706 Mission Street, 5th Floor, San Francisco, CA 94103-3113. Thank you very much for your time.

1. What is the size of your agency's paid staff? (Include full and part-time paid staff.)

Please circle one answer only.

- | | |
|---------------------------|---------------------------|
| 1. 25 or fewer paid staff | 3. 51 to 100 paid staff |
| 2. 26 to 50 paid staff | 4. 101 or more paid staff |

2. What percentage of your staff has a master's degree and/or professional license?

Please circle one answer only.

- | | |
|----------------|----------------|
| 1. 25% or less | 3. 51% to 75% |
| 2. 26% to 50% | 4. 76% or more |

3. What is the size of your agency's annual operating budget?

Please circle one answer only.

- | | |
|----------------------------|------------------------------|
| 1. \$250,000 or less | 4. \$1,000,001 - \$5,000,000 |
| 2. \$250,001 - \$500,000 | 5. \$5,000,001 or more |
| 3. \$500,001 - \$1,000,000 | |

4. Please write in the percentage of your annual operating budget that comes from each of these funding sources? (Approximate percentages are fine; total should be 100%.)

___% Contributions and grants from individuals, foundations, and/or corporations

___% Client fees

___% City and other government contracts

___% Other

= 100%

5. Which of the following best describes your agency?

Please circle one answer only.

1. The agency is made up of one program.

2. The agency is made up of two or more distinct programs.
(If yes, SKIP TO QUESTION #7.)

6. Which of the following best describes your agency's current situation with respect to unionization? (For single-program agencies only.)

Please circle one answer only.

1. There is currently no union organizing activity at our agency.
2. Our agency is currently experiencing union organizing activity.
3. Our agency has been unionized.
4. A unionization attempt has occurred, but was rejected by staff.

7. Which of the following best describe your agency's situation with respect to unionization? (For multi-program agencies only.)

Please check all that apply.

- There is no union organizing activity in any of our agency's programs.
- Some, but not all, of our programs are experiencing union organizing activity.
- Our entire agency is experiencing union organizing activity.
- Some, but not all, of our agency's programs have been unionized.
- All of our agency's programs have been unionized.
- A unionization attempt has occurred in one or more of our programs, but was rejected by staff.

8. If you are NOT currently unionized or experiencing union activity, have you had discussions with your staff about potential organizing at your agency?

Please circle one answer only.

1. Yes
2. No
3. Not applicable to me; we are currently unionized.

9. If you are NOT currently unionized or experiencing union activity, how likely do you believe it is that your agency will experience a labor organizing drive within the next two years?

Please circle one answer only.

1. Not likely at all
2. Somewhat likely
3. Likely
4. Very likely
5. Not applicable to me; we are currently unionized.

10. On a scale of 1 to 7, how would you rate your personal knowledge of issues pertaining to nonprofit unionization?

Please circle one number only.

(No knowledge at all) 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 (Very knowledgeable)

11. On a scale of 1 to 7, how would you rate the knowledge of your Board of Directors of issues pertaining to nonprofit unionization?

Please circle one number only.

(No knowledge at all) 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 (Very knowledgeable)

12. On a scale of 1 to 7, how important do you believe the following factors are in motivating nonprofit staffs to organize?

Please circle one number only.

Wages:

(No knowledge at all) 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 (Very knowledgeable)

Wage differential between staff and management:

(No knowledge at all) 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 (Very knowledgeable)

Wage differential among staff because of varying funding sources/contracts:

(No knowledge at all) 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 (Very knowledgeable)

Wage differential between nonprofit workers and government workers:

(No knowledge at all) 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 (Very knowledgeable)

Employee benefits (time off, health insurance, retirement, etc.):

(No knowledge at all) 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 (Very knowledgeable)

A greater voice in agency decision making:

(No knowledge at all) 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 (Very knowledgeable)

Quality of supervision and human resource management:

(No knowledge at all) 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 (Very knowledgeable)

13. On a scale of 1 to 7, what is your reaction to the following statements?

Please circle one number only.

Union organizing issues are essentially the same in nonprofit and for-profit organizations.

(Strongly disagree) 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 (Strongly agree)

Union organizing issues are essentially the same in nonprofit and government organizations.

(Strongly disagree) 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 (Strongly agree)

Union organizing issues are unique in the nonprofit sector.

(Strongly disagree) 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 (Strongly agree)

Unionization is an appropriate way for staff in nonprofit organizations to address their grievances with management.

(Strongly disagree) 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 (Strongly agree)

Government contracting is a significant motivating factor for unions organizing nonprofits.

(Strongly disagree) 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 (Strongly agree)

Nonprofits can function and thrive with unionized workforces.

(Strongly disagree) 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 (Strongly agree)

Nonprofits will be severely challenged by unionization.

(Strongly disagree) 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 (Strongly agree)

14. If your agency is NOT currently unionized, on a scale of 1 to 7, how would you view an organizing drive at your agency?

Please circle one number only; skip if not applicable to you.

(Strongly oppose) 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 (Strongly support)

15. As an Executive Director, which of the following would help you to address current or potential unionization at your agency?

Please check all that apply.

Consultation around development of an agency stance on unionization

Consultation on labor contract negotiations

A nonprofit unionization handbook or guide

Referral to specialized labor attorneys

Workshops for Boards and managers on nonprofit unionization

Other: _____

16. Please share any additional thoughts you have about nonprofit unionization. Your comments will remain anonymous.

THANK YOU FOR YOUR TIME AND ASSISTANCE!