

My name is Adele Butler and I am the President of the Retiree Division of 1199C NUHHCE. I have been retired since 1999 and I, along with other pensioners of 1199C, have been receiving **the same pension check since 1999**. The Social Security check went up a few cents a few times, but every time Social Security increased, so did the Medicare payments. So, basically our income has remained the same in over a ten year period!

I know and you know that the *cost of living* has not remained the same. Most of us are struggling more than ever to make ends meet. The cost for activities of daily living have increased tremendously—food, milk and vegetables—**sustenance** that the body needs even more so because we are older. I won't even speak about meat. Because it's something I can't afford. Utilities, gas and electric, home heating has increased 30%, a skyrocketing increase on top of groceries, health care and prescription drugs, so a lot of **us** will be without heat this winter. Imagine, water, too, plus mortgages, or rent, and taxes. They **continue** regardless of what **your** income is.

I know the economy is bad, but I am speaking on behalf of 1199C Retirees. **Enough is enough!** We have worked hard all our lives and we don't deserve to be treated like this! We have been without an increase in over ten years. Many of us will be homeless, without food and shelter so **you** will eventually have to care for us. Not a **pleasant** thought.

It is a shame and pitiful to see others like you receive a nice salary in double and triple figures with benefits and we are without bread, water and a roof over our heads.

I forgot another big issue: Health Care.: **copayments have gone up every year**. Increased illnesses, long waits in the Emergency Room or no visits to the doctor when you should because you can't afford it, have been **some of** the experiences we have had to incur.

Do **you** have health care?

Do **you** eat meat?

Do **you** have the privilege of going to the store and buying what you like?

Do **you** partake of the things you enjoy—the theatre, movies, sports, etc?

Well, we have had to give all of these niceties up. Instead, we worry about the next meal and how we are going to pay our bills. We are at a ... time in our lives when we should not have to live like this, (with) day-to-day worries. The increased **stress is bad for you**.

Please, **please**, give us **something**. A thirteenth check will do now. And next year, when things are better, an increase in our pension. And I **know**, things will be better next year.

Thank you.