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**Laurel nurses protest contract proposal** *by [Emilie Eastman](#) Staff writer*

Instead of working her four-hour shift at Laurel Regional Hospital on Wednesday, Andrea Magel of Bowie marched outside the building with about 30 other employees, chanting "Gotta feed my children, gotta pay my rent, ask Dimensions where the money went."

The Laurel sidewalk was one of three Prince George's County locations where unionized nurses and caregivers employed by Dimensions Health Care System protested the company's latest contract offer. Picket groups also gathered at Prince George's County Hospital Center in Cheverly and Glenridge Medical Center in Lanham, according to a press release by union 1199SEU Healthcare Workers East.

Dimensions is a not-for-profit healthcare system in Prince George's County that manages hospitals such as Prince George's Hospital Center, Laurel Regional Hospital, Bowie Health Campus and Glenridge Medical Center.

Magel said that under the proposed Dimensions contract, she would not be able to continue as a weekend alternative employee at the hospital — a job she said she has held for more than 12 years.

"I will not have a job on weekends," she said. "If that's the case I'll have to take another job someplace else."

The 1199SEU union represents about 1,400 nurses and caregivers at Dimensions' member organizations and has been in contract negotiations with the healthcare provider for almost a year, the press release stated.

The union said that Dimensions' latest contract offer would allow management to cancel shifts without reason, reassign caregivers to clinical areas outside their area of training and cancel the collective bargaining agreement in event of a sale or merger.

Dimensions did not return requests for comment by press time.

John Reid, executive vice president of the 1199SEU's local chapter, said in a statement that Dimensions is putting the quality of county healthcare in jeopardy.

"Dimensions needs to be able to recruit and retain the best possible nurses and caregivers and that starts with respecting the frontline nurses and caregivers who have already sacrificed so much at Dimensions facilities," he said.

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