

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**KEN HOWARD TO SEEK RE-ELECTION AS SAG-AFTRA PRESIDENT
JENNY O'HARA WILL RUN FOR SECRETARY-TREASURER**

**Candidates endorsed by Unite for Strength and USAN Leadership
for 2015 SAG-AFTRA Elections**

Los Angeles and New York, (June 1, 2015) – SAG-AFTRA President **Ken Howard** will seek re-election as the union's top national officer. Current SAG-AFTRA Los Angeles Vice President **Jenny O'Hara** will join Howard for secretary-treasurer. UFS and USAN will also field slates of candidates vying for open positions as national and local board members and as delegates to the second SAG-AFTRA National Convention, to be held in Los Angeles in October. Election ballots will be mailed to members on July 21st and will be tabulated on August 20th.

Joining Unite for Strength and USAN Leadership in endorsing Howard and O'Hara are **George Clooney, Betty White, Bryan Cranston, Rita Moreno, Octavia Spencer, Ron Perlman, Clark Gregg, Josh Gad, Rhea Perlman, S. Epatha Merkerson, Chris Messina, Stephen Wallem** and **Tom Bergeron**. Also endorsing Howard and O'Hara are numerous SAG-AFTRA leaders and National Officers, including Executive Vice President **Gabrielle Carteris**, Los Angeles President **Clyde Kusatsu**, New York President **Mike Hodge** and National Vice President, Recording Artists **Dan Navarro**.

"I love my work – both as an actor and as SAG-AFTRA President," said the Emmy and Tony Award winning Howard. "But while entertainment and media have always been tough businesses, they are uniquely challenging today. Despite countless jobs being created in seemingly endless new ways, performers have to work harder than ever to make ends meet. For many, it's a real struggle." Elaborating, Howard avowed, "It's my mission to make sure SAG-AFTRA protects our members' ability to do the work they love and to build their lives around it. This matters a great deal to me personally. These are not just my fellow members; they're my colleagues and friends. I know we will prevail because we've got amazing talent fighting on our side, and I'm eager to continue leading that charge."

On her candidacy for the secretary-treasurer position, Jenny O'Hara said, "Serving our union for years has shown me how crucial it is to have great leadership, and Ken Howard sets the standard. Under his steady, thoughtful guidance, SAG-AFTRA not only came into being but grows stronger each year... a tremendous achievement. I'm honored that he's asked me to run as secretary-treasurer and excited to join him in continuing to provide excellent national leadership for our fellow members."

Current SAG-AFTRA executive vice president and *Beverly Hills, 90210* star Gabrielle Carteris commented on her service with both candidates, "I've been privileged to work alongside Ken for years, and especially closely over the last two years as executive vice president. His success as a unifying figure for SAG-AFTRA speaks for itself and his superb leadership will keep us on a path of strength and growth. I've also watched Jenny O'Hara serve in the boardroom and on committees for years, so I know what a fierce protector our members have in her. Ken's asking her to run as secretary-treasurer reflects his vision for a strong, stable future, and I enthusiastically support them both."

Emmy, Golden Globe and SAG Award winner Bryan Cranston stated, "Ken Howard has been a stalwart in making SAG-AFTRA a reality." The *Breaking Bad* star added, "His compassion for our union's causes continues to impress me. It is evident in every decision he makes."

Film and Television icon Betty White noted, "As an eternal member of SAG and now SAG-AFTRA, I am SO happy to support Ken for another term. He's our kind of fella and just what our union needs!"

Oscar, Emmy, Tony, Grammy and SAG-AFTRA Life Achievement Award winner Rita Moreno also endorsed Howard and O'Hara, enthusiastically referring to the two union leaders as a "Dynamic Team!"

Golden Globe winner and *Sons of Anarchy* star Ron Perlman stated, "Ken Howard helped restore stability at SAG and was crucial in the merger of SAG-AFTRA. Along with UFS and USAN, his leadership restored our union's prestige within our industry and strategically maximized our leverage at the bargaining table." Perlman added, "Jenny O'Hara has truly distinguished herself as a world class performer and as a smart and formidable SAG-AFTRA leader. Those who know her can attest to her no-nonsense approach. She's a natural fit as our union's secretary-treasurer."

Agents of S.H.I.E.L.D. and *The Avengers* star Clark Gregg agreed with Perlman, "Having served on the national board alongside Ken Howard and Jenny O'Hara, I've seen firsthand how their diverse, national coalition has achieved impressive gains in our major contracts. These two have dedicated themselves to strengthening SAG-AFTRA in order to protect our members. For a brighter and more secure future, join me and vote for Ken Howard, Jenny O'Hara, UFS and USAN."

Emmy winner Rhea Perlman, currently appearing on *The Mindy Project*, remarked, "I whole-heartedly and excitedly support the team of Ken Howard and Jenny O'Hara as president and secretary-treasurer of SAG-AFTRA. I've had the joy of working with Jenny this past year and gotten to know her pretty well. I greatly admire her talent, her fierce dedication to our community and her cool-headed smarts. She's going to be terrific in this job. Along with Ken, who has been a strong, unifying president who helped guide the merger of SAG-AFTRA, they will be a dynamic duo building on our union's strength for the future."

Golden Globe and SAG Award winner S. Epatha Merkerson affirmed, "SAG-AFTRA is stronger than ever thanks to dedicated leaders like Ken Howard and Jenny O'Hara. With our support they will continue to strengthen our union to create an even brighter future for all SAG-AFTRA members. Join me and vote for Ken Howard, Jenny O'Hara, Mike Hodge, USAN and UFS."

Grammy winner, *The Comedians* star, and Howard's co-star on *The Wedding Ringer*, Josh Gad, mused on his admiration for the incumbent president, "Over the past few years I have had the opportunity to call Ken Howard not only a co-star but a friend. During that time I have bombarded him with many issues regarding SAG-AFTRA. Not only did he take the time to listen to but he addressed every issue with thoughtful consideration and aplomb. Subsequently, what I have come to realize is that my personal relationship to Ken is no different than any of the members of our esteemed union. He is the most approachable, thoughtful and considerate leader one could possibly hope for and his record speaks for itself. Our union has never been stronger and our future never brighter. I could not think of more capable hands to continue to guide us, listen to us, and ultimately lead us into the uncertain terrain of our ever-changing industry."

Tom Bergeron, host of *Dancing with the Stars*, quipped, "To paraphrase a ballroom judge I know, 'For Ken, a 10!' Happy to support my friend, SAG-AFTRA president Ken Howard, for another term leading our union!"

Stephen Wallem of *Nurse Jackie* reflected, "The daunting task of merging two unions could only have been captained by someone like Ken Howard. He is the epitome of class, quiet strength and leadership from which all leaders could learn a thing or two."

SAG-AFTRA Broadcast Steering Committee Chair, Joe Krebs, spoke of his experience with the president, "Ken Howard's steady, strong, thoughtful leadership has been one of the most significant reasons why our union has made enormous strides over the last two years. His support of broadcasters concerns has been demonstrated by his participation in our Broadcast Steering Committee meetings and his visits to broadcast shops across the country. Ken's leadership is making it happen."

END