

Press Release – For Immediate Release
April 30, 2009

Press Contact:
Christina Giorgio – (917) 208 9716
Mike Robert – (518) 796-8994



Latham Holiday Inn Express Fires Three Union Activists - Capital District Elected Officials Call on Employer to Adopt Fair Campaign and Election Pledge and to Reinstate Workers.

Albany, New York – Today more than 70 people showed their support for terminated union activists Craig Prusky, Becky Wallis and Molly Anastasio at the Workers United Local 471 Press Conference. These supporters were joined by Senator Neil Breslin, Assemblyman Bob Reilly, Mayor Jerry Jennings Council President Shawn Morris and Mary Sullivan, Executive Vice President of CDALF, all of whom addressed the crowd with words of condemnation for the Latham Holiday Inn Express's actions.

Workers at the Holiday Inn Express in Latham want to improve their jobs and the working standards for all hotel employees in the Capital District. On April 23rd, they notified their employer, the Holiday Inn Express - Latham, of their desire to form a union with Workers United Local 471. Within the 24-hour period before and after the notification, the Holiday Inn Express fired half of the organizing committee.

In sharing their story with the gathering, Craig Prusky and Becky Wallis talked about the shock and disappointment of being fired once their employer found out of their union organizing activities.

“Although our working conditions were very poor, I still loved coming into work every day to serve my customers and to be fired for just wanting to have some job security through a union is very painful. But I am still proud of standing up and am confident that we will eventually win,” said Becky Wallis, terminated Latham Holiday Inn Express server and housekeeper.

“It is very hard to lose your health insurance because you exercised your right to improve your working conditions with a union. But I want to do what I can to see that Latham Holiday Inn Express does not do this to anyone else,” shared Craig Prusky, terminated maintenance engineer, Holiday Inn Express Latham.

Each of the elected officials spoke of the need to change the law to prevent employers from intimidating workers who want to organize and signed a petition urging the Holiday Inn Express and all Capital District employers to take the Fair Campaign and Election Pledge. They also called on the Holiday Inn Express to reinstate all the terminated union activists.

Workers United Local 471 Director Mike Roberts shared, “these workers have a right to organize yet employers routinely thumb their nose at these laws because the penalties currently in place fail to adequately discourage employers from braking them. We need to enact Employee Free Choice and until we do, I am glad to know that our Capital District will not tolerate retaliatory firings. Employers willing to play fair should be more than willing to sign onto the Fair Campaign Pledge as it embodies basic democratic principles that govern all free and fair elections.”

Workers United Local 471, 368 Broadway, Saratoga Springs, NY 12866
Rochester Regional Joint Board, 750 East Ave., Rochester NY 14607