



# NEWS

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SERVICE EMPLOYEES INTERNATIONAL UNION

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

Tuesday, December 12, 2006

## JANITORS IN THE PHILADELPHIA SUBURBS WIN HISTORIC UNION CONTRACT

*-- Wage Hikes by as Much as 60% & Employer-Paid Health Benefits for More than 1,100 Janitors -*

**Philadelphia, PA**— Janitors in the Philadelphia suburbs have won a historic area-wide contract with wage increases, health and other benefits. Under the terms of the contract, suburban office janitors who currently make as little as \$6.50 with no health benefits will see their wages rise by as much as 60% by 2010, and for the first time receive an employer-paid health benefit.

“The contract is not just a victory for janitors in the Philadelphia suburbs, but for janitors and cleaners everywhere,” said Mike Fishman, Local 32BJ President. “They all deserve a chance at the American Dream.”

Under the contract covering suburban office buildings, janitor wages will rise to a minimum of \$10.50 per hour. Full-time workers will be eligible for employer-paid health coverage and part-timers will be eligible for an employer-paid health benefit by the end of the contract.

“Moving forward, the union will focus its campaign on renegade contractors, such as Budget Maintenance, which are standing in the way of workers trying to achieve better working conditions,” said Wayne MacManiman, Local 32BJ District Supervisor in Philadelphia. Budget was previously investigated by the U.S. Department of Labor and forced to pay back wages after failing to pay the minimum wage.

“I applaud the hard-working men and women in their struggle for justice,” said State Sen. Andy Dinniman (D- West Chester). “I will support their struggle until every worker gains the respect they deserve and the pay they need.”

Local 32BJ launched its suburban Philadelphia campaign last year to reduce, if not eliminate the wage and benefit disparity between suburban office cleaners in Philadelphia and other comparable markets.

"We are all happy today because we are turning this job from a low-wage job into a good job that pays enough to provide our families," said Orlando Mass, a janitor in suburban Philadelphia.

The campaign has engaged hundreds of workers in Bucks, Montgomery, Chester, and Delaware counties, and has included rallies, marches, and strikes. The campaign has also received the support of Center City cleaners, more than a dozen local and federal elected officials and many clergy members, community activists and business leaders.

With more than 85,000 members in six states and Washington, D.C., including 5,000 in the Philadelphia area, Local 32BJ is the largest property services union in the country.

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