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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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NEW YORK OFFICE CLEANERS VOTE TO STRIKE

-- 26,000 Workers Could Walk Off the Job at 2,000 Buildings on New Year's Day --

New York, NY – With their contract set to expire on New Year's Eve, thousands of commercial office cleaners took their contract fight to the streets in mid-town Manhattan today and authorized their union's bargaining committee to call for a strike if building owners refused their demands for better pay.

"Office cleaners are ready to strike for the fair wage increase they deserve," said Michael Fishman, Local 32BJ President. "The \$250 billion real estate industry should not be nickel and diming the men and women who keep their buildings clean and running well."

In the three years since the last contract negotiation, building owners have enjoyed a dramatic upturn in the real estate market while building cleaners have seen a drop in their purchasing power. According to industry source, CoStar, rents have jumped 26% in just the past year and vacancy rates have dropped to 5.3%, a six-year low. Furthermore, according to Reis, another industry source, rents are projected to continue rising through 2011. Meanwhile, building cleaners have seen their real wages, when adjusted for inflation, drop 5% since January 2005.

"The time has come to bring workers' wages back in line with the rising cost of living in New York," said Fishman. "With New York City's commercial real estate industry booming, there is no excuse for holding back on the wage increases these hard working men and women need to get by in New York."

"From the stagehands to writers and taxi drivers, and now office cleaners, New York's working people are standing up for better pay," said Fishman. "Better pay is needed to make sure working people can make ends meet in the most expensive city in the country."

Failure to reach a new contract by December 31, 2007, when the current contract expires, could lead to a strike of some 26,000 commercial property service workers at more than 2,000 buildings, including the World Financial Center, the Met Life building and the Empire State Building. Contract talks started on October 24th when Local 32BJ met with the Realty Advisory Board (RAB), an association of commercial building owners, managers and cleaning contractors.

"Striking is a last resort, but we will strike if we have to," said Tomas Sobalvarro, a midtown office building worker. "It's getting harder to make ends meet; we need a raise to support our families."

New York City is one of six markets in the northeast where Local 32BJ is negotiating contracts for some 50,000 commercial office building workers from Hartford, CT to Washington, D.C. Rallies and strike votes will take place tomorrow in Newark, NJ, White Plains, NY and Stamford, CT. Nearly 150,000 union workers and their families depend on employer paid health care under these contracts.

With more than 85,000 members in six states, including 65,000 in New York City, Local 32BJ is the largest private sector union in New York and the largest property service worker union in the country.