



NEWS

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SERVICE EMPLOYEES INTERNATIONAL UNION

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Monday, January 14, 2008

**SENATOR CLINTON, LEADING CLERGY, COMMUNITY LEADERS
SUPPORT LOCAL 32BJ “STAND FOR SECURITY” CAMPAIGN
- *Call-to-Action Event Honors Legacy of Martin Luther King, Jr.* -**

New York, NY – Senator Hillary Clinton, leading clergy and community leaders today voiced their support for Local 32BJ’s campaign to raise standards for private security officers at an event at the Manhattan Center honoring the life of Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Brooklyn Congregations Together, a group of eleven churches in central Brooklyn, co-sponsored the event with Local 32BJ on the eve of Dr. King’s birthday.

“Dr. King taught us that civil rights and economic justice go hand-in-hand,” said Michael Fishman, Local 32BJ President. “Our campaign for justice for security officers – who earn poverty-like wages protecting million dollar buildings – is an appropriate way to carry on King’s legacy.”

Four decades ago, Dr. King stood up for Memphis sanitation workers who faced unjust conditions and low wages. At the beginning of their strike in 1968, they earned an average of just \$1.70 per hour, which is now equal to \$10.27, according to the Bureau of Labor Statistics. Today in New York City, more than 60,000 men and women, most of whom are African-American, work as private security officers. Although they are responsible for keeping our city safe and secure, many officers earn less than \$10 an hour, receive no affordable health care and little, if any, state-of-the-art security training.

“Dr. King has been an inspiration to me since I saw him speak with my church as a teenager. He reminded us we had the duty – and the power – to make a difference not only in our lives, but in the lives of others,” said Senator Clinton. “I am honored to pay tribute to his legacy today with leaders from the faith and labor communities in support of security workers across this city, as we push to ensure workers are treated with the dignity and respect they deserve. I know we will continue his work by coming together, working together, and delivering on the promise of our nation.”

“We ask security officers to protect the lives of thousands of people, but we don’t treat them with respect or pay them enough to support their families,” said Rev. Dr. Johnny Ray Youngblood of St. Paul Community Baptist Church. “Something is terribly wrong when a person who works a full-time job still doesn’t have enough money to take care of themselves and their children. There’s something wrong with our system when working people have to supplement their income with welfare.”

This spring, security officers will be fighting to increase standards for wages, health care and training as

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part of Local 32BJ's "Stand for Security" campaign. The campaign has picked up momentum in recent months with the backing of many religious and community supporters, and new campaigns visible at Jet Blue and Fordham University, which both use Summit, a low-wage security contractor.

Bishop Eric Figueroa of the New Life Tabernacle, Dr. James Forbes of the Healing of the Nations Foundations and Hazel Dukes of the New York State NAACP, along with City Comptroller William Thompson and Congressman Anthony Weiner were among the leaders calling for better wages, improved benefits and increased training for security officers.

With more than 85,000 members, including 60,000 in New York City, Local 32BJ is the largest property services union in the country.

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