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SERVICE EMPLOYEES INTERNATIONAL UNION

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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CONTRACT TALKS BEGIN FOR THOUSANDS OF SECURITY OFFICERS

- RAB Negotiations Kick Off Campaign to Raise Industry Standards -

New York, NY – Today, Local 32BJ kicked off a campaign to bargain new union contracts for nearly 4,000 security officers in New York City. The talks began this morning, when the union presented contract proposals to the Realty Advisory Board (RAB) for approximately 1,500 of the officers. This Spring, Local 32BJ will negotiate new contracts for members with several major owners and security contractors, as well as continue to work with non-union officers through the “Stand for Security” organizing campaign, in an effort to raise standards across the private security industry.

“For far too long, security officers have been left behind. Now it’s time to significantly improve the wages, benefits and training for security officers, who are at the front lines of keeping the public safe and secure,” said Kevin Doyle, Local 32BJ SEIU Executive Vice President. “We offered fair proposals to the RAB that New York City’s wealthy real estate market can afford.”

The proposals to the RAB include wage increases and improved health insurance and other benefits, such as pre-paid legal services and enhanced industry-focused training.

Local 32BJ will also bargain separately with major national security contractors including Allied Barton, Securitas/Burns and Guardsmark for new contracts as part of the union’s effort to achieve higher wages, stronger minimum rates and health insurance for every security officer. Some officers earn wages as low as \$10 per hour, despite the fact they work next to office cleaners earning nearly double that rate. In addition, many security officers do not have health care benefits. This is the first time Local 32BJ will bargain multiple contracts for security officers simultaneously, with a goal of achieving a common future expiration date.

“We need better wages and benefits in order to support our families, and we need to be treated with respect for the job we do,” said Gaspar Santiago, an officer at 30 Rockefeller Center and member of the bargaining committee. “This is the first time we are all joining together to fight for new contracts at the same time, and we have the support of all 32BJ members behind us.”

Security officers who are members of Local 32BJ work at venerable New York City institutions, including Lincoln Center, MOMA, the New School University and Rockefeller Center, as well as commercial office buildings, hospitals and schools.

“The private security industry is plagued by low wages and minimal training standards,” said Doyle. “Achieving new, strong contracts for officers who are already members of our union goes hand-in-hand with continuing to work with non-union officers. This is about raising standards across the entire industry and empowering officers to get ahead.”

With more than 100,000 members in six states and Washington, D.C., including 70,000 in the New York area, Local 32BJ is the largest property services union in the country. The union represents 6,000 security officers.

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