



NEWS

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SEVEN CLEANERS WIN \$24,000 SETTLEMENT AGAINST WILMINGTON TRUST CLEANING CONTRACTOR

Wilmington, DE –The National Labor Relations Board (NLRB) has settled a complaint against Optima Cleaning Systems, Inc. with agreement by Optima to pay more than \$24,000 in back wages to seven cleaners at the Wilmington Trust Building in Wilmington, DE.

“This settlement vindicates the hardworking people of Wilmington who are fighting for decent wages and a better life for their families, said Kurt Westby, 32BJ Area Director.”Optima and other employers should know that threats and intimidation do not belong in the workplace.”

The cleaners, including one who had worked for Optima for 9 years, were abruptly terminated after union organizing activity began last spring. One of the fired workers spoke at a union rally three weeks before he was fired. Optima admits no guilt to the charges in the complaint which includes photographing and videotaping lawful union activity on public sidewalks, and following union organizers as they visit employees at their homes.

Cleaners employed at the Wilmington Trust Corp. building, --a bank that has received \$330 million from the Treasury Department’s bailout plan—were earning as little as \$7.25 an hour, with no access to affordable and quality healthcare.

“Employers actions against hardworking people trying to lawfully organize are unacceptable,” said Mike Fishman, President of 32BJ SEIU. “We fully support the cleaners in Delaware that are fighting for healthcare for their kids and better pay to support their families.”

More than 60 million workers in America would like to join unions, but only 100,000 had the chance to vote for one last year. According to recent studies, every year more than 23,000 workers in the United States are fired or retaliated against for supporting a union at work, and 90 percent of employers force workers to attend intimidating one-on-one meetings with their supervisors.

According to the Economic Policy Institute, 54 percent of employers threaten workers in mandatory one-on-one meetings; and more than a third illegally fire union supporters. On average, union workers earn 30 percent more than non-union workers and are 60 percent more likely to have employer-paid health insurance.

With more than 110,000 members in eight states, including Delaware, 32BJ SEIU is the largest property service workers union in the country.

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