

UniteHere!



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HOTEL WORKERS
RISING!



lifting one another above the poverty line

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San Francisco Hotel Workers Overwhelmingly Approve Strike

(October 22, 2009, San Francisco, CA) – San Francisco hotel workers voted overwhelmingly today to authorize strikes against 31 of the city’s upscale hotels. Over 3,000 workers cast ballots, with 92.3% approving the measure. The union’s 125-member bargaining committee now has the authority to call actions up to and including strikes if necessary. Workers will remain on the job unless and until the bargaining committee calls a strike.

The hotels affected by today’s vote include many of San Francisco’s most prominent properties:

Clift Hotel
Courtyard by Marriott (2nd Street)
Fairmont
Four Seasons
Grand Hyatt
Hilton Financial District
Hilton Fisherman’s Wharf
Hilton San Francisco
Holiday Inn Civic Center
Holiday Inn Express Fisherman’s Wharf
Holiday Inn Fisherman’s Wharf
Holiday Inn Golden Gateway
Hotel Kabuki
Hotel Vitale
Huntington Hotel
Hyatt Regency

InterContinental Moscone
InterContinental Mark Hopkins
Marriott Fisherman’s Wharf
Marriott San Francisco
Marriott Union Square
Omni Hotel
Palace Hotel
Parc 55 Hotel
Renaissance Stanford Court
Sheraton at Fisherman’s Wharf
Sir Francis Drake Hotel
St. Regis Hotel
W San Francisco
Westin Market Street
Westin St. Francis

The union representing the hotel workers, Unite Here Local 2, has met with representatives from Hyatt, Hilton, Starwood, InterContinental and Fairmont corporations. The details of the corporations’ proposals vary, but the overall objective is the same: to accomplish what they failed to do during negotiations in 2004-2006. To varying degrees, these hotel corporations have proposed increasing workloads by cutting shifts and combining jobs. All of them have proposed shifting the burden of rising health care costs onto workers who earn an average of \$30,000 to \$35,000 a year.

This comes even as hotel companies report continued profitability, stock prices have soared, and Wall Street payouts have returned to levels before last year’s crash. In the last three months, hotel company stocks have soared 20-30%. Starwood (which operates the Westin St. Francis, Palace, W, and St. Regis hotels) today announced profits of \$180 million during the first three quarters of 2009, while Hyatt (which operates the Grand Hyatt and Hyatt Regency) is preparing an initial public stock offering that is expected to raise over \$1 billion.

“When company executives begin putting their private jets on the market, then we’ll know they’re really suffering. Until then, they can afford what we’ve proposed,” said Jim Taylor, a bartender at various Starwood hotels.

Unite Here! Local 2 is the union of hotel and food service workers in San Francisco and San Mateo Counties. It represents about 12,000 workers in the hospitality industry. For more information visit www.unitehere2.org or contact Riddhi Mehta at 707-695-2364 or rmehta@unitehere2.org.