



Low-wage workers leading the way to poverty's end.

**For immediate release**

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## **ESPN Zone violates WARN Act: workers demand dignity and compliance with the law**

(BALTIMORE) ESPN workers will be at Baltimore's ESPN Zone location to put ESPN on notice for violation of the WARN Act and call for respect of workers' rights. Workers will set a seven day deadline to meet face to face with Disney owned ESPN to resolve these abuses before taking legal action. ESPN Zone shut-down Tuesday, June 15, 2010. Workers learned of the closing through the media giving them a week's notice they would be out of a job. The WARN Act requires that an employer give workers at least 60 days notice with penalties attached if this is violated.

Who: United Workers' ESPN Human Rights Committee  
What: Press Conference to put ESPN on notice for violation of WARN Act  
Where: ESPN Zone at Baltimore's Inner Harbor  
When: Wednesday, June 30, 2010 at 11 AM

ESPN's treatment of workers in this process is just another example of worker disrespect at the Inner Harbor. "They were just there to make money off us. We were the backbone. We made the ESPN how it is and how they got rid of us is real bad and I know they know that. Don't try to sugarcoat it. We are human beings. How are we going to live now?", said Leonard Gray, a cook at the ESPN of over 6 years.

While the ESPN human rights committee, made up entirely of ESPN workers, will be leading the struggle to resolve the abuses specific to ESPN, workers across the Inner Harbor are uniting and organizing across vendors to secure human rights demands for all low-wage workers at the Inner Harbor. Inner Harbor workers have called for harbor developers Cordish and GGP that control the Inner Harbor to ensure basic human rights standards. Shawn Greene, an ESPN worker of 9 yrs, highlights the need for developer accountability, "I know it wasn't Cordish that personally treated ESPN workers they way they did, but they knew about it. Whoever they've got in their building, they should make sure they are going to treat their employees fairly. They've got to be held to that standard too."

On October 25, 2008 low-wage workers declared the Inner Harbor to be a "Human Rights Zone" and demanded that workers' human rights to work with dignity, education and health care be respected. Specific demands were later announced, including that the developers mandate, through leases with their vendors, that every worker at the Inner Harbor be paid at least the state living wage, and that developers agree to fund education and health care programs for workers and their families. The United Workers has formally requested face-to-face meetings with Cordish and GGP. Neither developer has yet responded to the demands or the request to meet with the United Workers.

The United Workers is a human rights organization led by low-wage workers and was founded by homeless day laborers in 2002 at the Eutaw street shelter, an abandoned firehouse turned homeless shelter.

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