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Nation's Largest Property Service Workers Union Endorses One Fair Wage Campaign in D.C. to Support Tipped Workers

Washington, D.C. - The following statement is attributable to Jaime Contreras, Executive Vice President of 32BJ SEIU, which represents over 175,000 members in 11 states, including over 20,000 in the D.C. area and Baltimore, MD, as the largest property service workers union in the country:

“32BJ’s property service workers, who helped lead the Fight for \$15 campaign across the nation, proudly endorse the One Fair Wage campaign to ensure that D.C. restaurant workers aren’t forced to rely on tips to make up the difference for unlivable poverty wages. These unsustainable conditions drove thousands of working men and women out of the industry, after many got sick and even died keeping our economy alive during the pandemic. They were confronted with a perfect storm of few if any customers to provide tips, many who may not even know how little tipped workers earn during a time of economic uncertainty.

“32BJ members know firsthand that tipped workers can’t support themselves much less a family. Before enactment of a tipped minimum wage at National and Dulles Airports, many of 32BJ’s tipped wheelchair agents there experienced homelessness, had to skip meals and slept in the airport because they couldn’t afford rent or transportation. Workers even reported being discharged for mere allegations of soliciting tips, a practice that is forbidden for wheelchair agents.

“While every other contractor pays wheelchair agents the airport’s tipped minimum wage – the Huntleigh Corporation is the sole outlier not paying this wage. As a consequence, Huntleigh relies on disabled passenger tips to make up the difference in wages they aren’t paying workers.

“As 32BJ continues to fight to ensure the tipped minimum wage is paid to 350 Huntleigh workers at DCA and Dulles, we support the fight for tipped workers in the District.”