

American Federation of Labor and Congress of Industrial Organizations



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AFL-CIO President Calls On Yale to Settle A Fair Contract Announces Major Labor Movement Mobilization at Yale on Saturday, Sept. 13

(Washington; Sept. 5) - - AFL-CIO President John Sweeney has called for union members across the nation to support the striking Yale workers and he announced today a massive AFL-CIO solidarity rally for Saturday, September 13 in New Haven.

Sweeney has asked for a meeting with Yale University President Richard Levin to discuss the workers' situation.

"If this great institution cannot meet the simple demands of its employees for fair wages, pensions and decent, stable jobs, then what hope do we have for the future of working families in this country? This is an issue of basic values and fairness, and it's an issue for all working people and all of labor," said Sweeney.

Yale, one of the wealthiest and most influential institutions in America, has not met workers' basic needs. "I've worked here 19 years," said Virginia Henry, a custodian at the Peabody Museum at Yale. "If I retire at 65, my pension will be just \$8328 a year...now I worry that at 65 years old, I'll have to get another job."

Four thousand clerical, food service, maintenance and other employees have been on strike since August 27. The striking employees are members of Hotel and Restaurant Employees locals 34 and 35 and SEIU Local 1199.

"The Yale leadership must understand that the union movement is united in making sure the Yale workers build a better future for themselves, their families, and their community," said Sweeney. "This is a fundamentally important struggle for all of labor. That's why union members and our friends and allies will stand behind these dedicated Yale strikers in a mass show of support on September 13."

The September 13 rally will be at 12 noon on the Green in New Haven, between College and Temple Streets.

Sweeney today also called on the 64 unions of the AFL-CIO to provide financial support to the strikers.

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The AFL-CIO is the umbrella organization for the nation's unions, representing 13 million working men and women nationwide.