

Noose Incident Highlights Systemic Ballpark Discrimination

Poor Local Hiring Record, Racially Charged Firings Part of Disturbing Pattern

Washington, DC, February 25, 2007: The DC Economic Empowerment Coalition (DCEEC) today expressed its profound disappointment in what appears to be a pattern systemic discrimination at the job site of the District's new baseball stadium.

"I'm deeply saddened by this incident," said Ted Trabue, Executive Director of the DCEEC and a 4th generation Washingtonian. "Unfortunately, it's not a complete shock to those of us who have followed the new ballpark's work environment."

DCEEC, which has issued a ground-breaking report about the failure of labor unions to provide required work to DC residents and minority workers (available at www.alossfordcworkers.com), has been long concerned about workplace discrimination at the new ballpark.

Several months ago, six employees were fired from the ballpark under racially charged circumstances in which they were told 'monkeys could do their job.' Shortly thereafter, Joslyn Williams, head of the Metro Washington Council of the AFL, told the workers to 'keep quiet' about the incident in order not to embarrass the unions.

"There's obviously a pattern here. They've shut out local and minority residents from work, they've been silent over the racism involving the electricians, and now this," said Trabue. "It's clear those involved with stadium construction -- including IBEW Local 26, which has been involved in each of the racist incidents -- have little regard for local, minority workers."

The DCEEC ballpark report detailed the failure of local labor unions to meet the requirements of the Project Labor Agreement (PLA), which guides the construction of the new ballpark. Just 29% of journey worker hours have been performed by DC residents, though the contractually mandated requirement is 50%. It has been reported that the worker fired over the noose incident was from Maryland.

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