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איגוד הרבנים המתקדמים

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REFORM RABBIS SUPPORT HYATT WORKERS, IMPLORE HOTEL GIANT TO TREAT EMPLOYEES FAIRLY

Central Conference of American Rabbis (CCAR), World's Largest Group of Jewish Clergy, Urges Jewish Institutions and Individuals to Support Hyatt Workers in Their Disputes

NEW YORK CITY (AUGUST 6, 2010) – The world's largest group of Jewish clergy, the Central Conference of American Rabbis (CCAR), issued a statement today calling upon Hyatt Hotels Corp. to honor fair labor practices and supporting Hyatt housekeepers and workers in their effort to retain their "hard won and fair compensation...so that they don't slip into poverty."

Unionized Hyatt employees who feel that the hotel chain is taking advantage of the recession are protesting staff cuts and what they believe are unsatisfactory work conditions.

According to the statement, the CCAR, which represents 2,000 reform rabbis, "has made workers' rights a priority and has consistently stood firmly on the side of labor" throughout its over 120 years of existence. The statement also says, "...we call on the owners and leadership of Hyatt Hotels to commit to the Jewish and universal obligations to treat workers fairly and to recognize the value of their labor. We call on all Jewish institutions and individuals to support Hyatt workers in their disputes."

To arrange a conversation with Rabbi Ellen Weinberg Dreyfus, President of the CCAR, or Rabbi Steven A. Fox, Chief Executive, please contact Itay Engelman of Sommerfield Communications at 212-255-8386 or itay@sommerfield.com.

The full statement from the CCAR is below:

Rabbinic Leaders Call Upon Hyatt To Honor Fair Labor Practices

"You shall not abuse a needy and destitute laborer" (Deuteronomy 24:14)

Employees have a right to organize and demand just conditions and compensation for their labor.

(Tosefta Bava Metzia 11:24)

Throughout its history of over 120 years, the Central Conference of American Rabbis, the world's largest organization of Jewish clergy, has made workers' rights a priority and has consistently stood firmly on the side of labor. Among the Reform Rabbinate's proudest moments have been those occasions when we have collectively and individually spoken out for child labor laws, against dangerous workplace conditions, and for fair and decent pay.

How sad that we must do so again in the 21st Century. We, the leadership of the CCAR, cannot stand idly by as the housekeepers and hotel workers of many Hyatt Hotels stand to lose their hard won and fair compensation as the choice is being given them either to lose their health benefits or lose their jobs. The call to pursue justice (Deut. 16:20) demands that we stand with these workers so that they don't slip into poverty.

Therefore, we call on the owners and leadership of Hyatt Hotels to commit to the Jewish and universal obligations to treat workers fairly and to recognize the value of their labor. We call on all Jewish institutions and individuals to support Hyatt workers in their disputes.

No celebration can be truly joyous if it takes place at an institution which withholds fair wages from its most vulnerable employees.

Rabbi Ellen Weinberg Dreyfus
President

Rabbi Steven A. Fox
Chief Executive

Central Conference of American Rabbis

About The CCAR

The Central Conference of American Rabbis, founded in 1889, is the oldest and largest rabbinic organization in North America. As the professional organization for Reform Rabbis of North America, the CCAR projects a powerful voice in the religious life of the American and international Jewish communities. Since its establishment, the CCAR has a rich history of giving professional and personal support to Reform rabbis, providing them opportunities for study, professional development and spiritual growth beginning while they are still in seminary, through mid-careers, and into retirement. The CCAR is uniquely positioned to meet the ongoing needs of its nearly 2,000 member rabbis (virtually the entire Reform rabbinite) and the entire Reform Jewish community. For more information please visit the CCAR's website at <http://ccarnet.org/>.