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Pulte Homes Agrees to Back Pay for 10 Construction Workers Illegally Fired for Trying to Improve their Lives with LIUNA

Nation's Largest Corporate Homebuilder Also Agrees to Inform Workers They Will Not Block Freedom to Join a Union

Washington, DC (March 16, 2009) – LIUNA today announced that Pulte Homes, Inc. – the largest corporate homebuilder in America – has agreed to back pay for ten construction workers whom LIUNA charged were illegally fired and whose dismissal drew support from thousands of construction workers across the nation.

The workers – six from Tucson, Arizona and four from Mesquite, Nevada – were fired by Pulte in September 2009. Charges alleging Pulte violated labor laws were filed with the National Labor Relations Board and the company agreed back pay after the board found sufficient reason to believe a labor law violation had occurred.

The charges alleged that Pulte spied on workers as they discussed coming together in a union, threatened workers with job loss and other reprisals for supporting the union, and fired workers for wearing LIUNA orange t-shirts and asking to be paid for all hours worked.

“I worked very hard for Pulte Homes and was never paid fairly for my work. For that reason, my co-workers and I tried to join a union. When Pulte found out, we were threatened with job loss and eventually fired,” said Romeo Santos, a construction worker from Mesquite, Nevada.

After the firings, LIUNA members jumped to the aid of their fellow construction workers with thousands of calls and emails to Pulte demanding the company rehire the fired workers. Pulte sued LIUNA and asked a U.S. District Court to block workers from contacting the company. The court denied that attempt by Pulte to silence the voices of LIUNA members. After the outpouring of support, Pulte rehired some of the workers.

“These settlements are a solid dose of justice and a victory for the workers fired in Nevada and Arizona, but we will not stop until all Pulte construction workers are treated fairly, paid for the hours they work and have the right to improve their lives by coming together in a union,” said LIUNA General President Terry O’Sullivan.

The terms of the settlement require Pulte to pay more than \$20,000 in back-pay and benefits to the fired workers, rehire all of the workers and post a notice in their workplaces notifying employees of their right to join a union without interference.

LIUNA has reported that cheating construction workers out of wages is systematic and pervasive in the corporate homebuilding industry. Interviews with residential construction workers revealed that, in order to increase profits, many corporate homebuilders and their subcontractors routinely fail to pay overtime wages, falsify workers' timesheets and keep workers off the clock while traveling between jobsites and waiting for materials to be delivered. In October 2009, SelectBuild – once the largest residential subcontractor doing work for Pulte and other corporate builders - settled a class action wage fraud lawsuit, paying more than \$241,000 in unpaid wages to 86 workers from Arizona, California and Nevada.

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The half-million members of LIUNA – the Laborers' International Union of North America – are on the forefront of the construction industry, a powerhouse of workers who are proud to build America.