



MEDIA ADVISORY

CONTACT: Eric Bailey, ebailey@seiu73.org

Candlelight Vigil in Hyde Park Brings Passionate Testimonies from Workers

Chicago, IL – Last night, as the 15th day of the Cook County strike for a fair contract concluded, striking workers held a candlelight vigil in Hyde Park to honor those we have lost to COVID and the Cook County workers who kept the County running through the pandemic.

"When everyone else was working from home, these workers were doing their jobs, risking their lives and the lives of their families. They were working in hospitals and courthouses and the jail and at election sites serving the people of Cook County," said Dian Palmer, President of Local 73. "We just pray that Toni Preckwinkle feels this light from the corner of 51st and Kimbark, to wherever she is tonight in the country. That she feels it and does the right thing."

"I lost my father to COVID this year. I got COVID from working at the County Jail," said Shadonna Davis, Retro Rehabilitation Worker at Cook County Jail. "It spread to a loved one who ended up on a ventilator for five days. But Toni Preckwinkle refuses to give us pandemic pay that she gave other workers in the County Jail. As retro rehabilitation workers, we are the liaison between detainees and their families. We are face to face with all of these people on a daily basis. Toni Preckwinkle didn't care about us then, and she isn't showing that she cares about us now. All we're asking for is what we're due. The County Jail was the number one hotspot and we lost friends and family members. Toni needs to find it in her heart to settle our contract."

"I've known Toni over 25 years. I helped her become an alderman. I helped her become County President. She spoke at my mom's funeral. I remember there was a time she was a good person. But as she moved up in power, she lost focus," said Marvin Robinson, Environmental Service Worker at Stroger Hospital. "I pray God touches your heart, Toni. What happened to you, Toni? You're lost! Don't let that money take your soul and forget the people who helped you get where you are."

The workers of Cook County represented by SEIU Local 73 are now on their 16th day of striking. This marks the longest strike in Local 73 history.

Cook County strikers will be flyering at the Taste of Chicago today:

10:00 am to Noon

Westside: 135 N Kedzie

Northside: 6701 W. Forest Preserve Dr.

1:00 - 3:00 pm

Southside: 1744 W. 63rd St.

#

SEIU Local 73 represents more than 29,000 workers, primarily in public service and publicly funded positions in school districts, municipalities, social service agencies, and many other job classifications in Illinois and Indiana. We are dedicated to improving the lives of workers and their families.