



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## **Illinois Tollway Workers Fight Proposed Layoffs**

State Will Use Taxpayer Dollars to Privatize Work

**Chicago, IL** – Illinois Tollway workers gathered outside Tollway Headquarters to fight the proposed layoff of all Tollway workers. SEIU Local 73 represents 150 Toll Collectors, Money Room Drivers, and Money Room Employees.

“These experienced union workers were in contract negotiations for nine months when Tollway administrators unexpectedly announced plans to lay them off,” **said Josph Richert, SEIU Local 73 Secretary-Treasurer.** “Instead, tollway administrators will spend taxpayer dollars to hire a company with proven excessive wait times, fewer calls being handled, and low satisfaction ratings. We are calling on the Tollway Board to keep the Tollway family employees who ultimately provide the people of Illinois with the best value.”

“Each day every worker receives well over 40 calls from customers needing assistance. With each phone call, we strive to find a resolution, ensuring our customers are not just satisfied, but delighted. Our dedication to customer service is not just a job requirement, but a reflection of our commitment to the Tollway family,” **said Clovia Lockridge, Toll Collector of 11 years.** “We continue to ask why we are being laid off despite our years of dedication and service, with no answer. We continue to ask why our work is being outsourced to a private company like Lighthouse, when they have high turnover rates while we outperform them in every way. Rather than treat us with dignity and respect, they have chosen to lay off their highly trained, effective workers in favor of a private company with no explanation.”

“Most recently, I experienced a great tragedy in which I lost my home and 75% of my family’s belongings. Some things can never be replaced, however, knowing that I had stable employment with the Tollway gave me a ray of hope and a sense of relief that my family and I could start over again,” **said Raquel Buckner, Toll Collector of 10 years.** “As the sole provider for my family, and the parent of a child with ASD, I now live in fear of what will happen to my family. I call on the Tollway Board to put a stop to these layoffs.”

Workers will be speaking before the Tollway Board meeting at 9:15 am.

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*SEIU Local 73 represents more than 35,000 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.*