



City of Somerville, Massachusetts

Legislation Text

File #: 23-1597, Version: 1

Agenda Summary

In Support of Service Employees International Union (SEIU) Local 32BJ's cleaning contract campaign.

Official Text

WHEREAS: 12,000 New England janitors are currently in contract negotiations for the fair and reasonable goals of higher wages, more full-time job opportunities that provide family healthcare, and more job protections and better working conditions; and

WHEREAS: These workers clean over 200 million square feet of floor space in Greater Boston, which has one of the country's strongest commercial office markets and a thriving and rapidly expanding life sciences sector; and provide a sanitized learning, living, and working environment for over 220,000 students and 51,000 employees at local colleges and universities; and

WHEREAS: Somerville is home to millions of square feet of new commercial space and a rapidly expanding presence of major employers in life sciences and healthcare, which bring high-income jobs into the city; and

WHEREAS: While many of these traditionally office-based employees were able to work from home during the pandemic, janitors risked their own health to ensure that buildings and public spaces were safe and sanitized during one of the greatest crises we have ever faced-the COVID-19 pandemic; and

WHEREAS: More than three years after stepping up as essential workers during the crisis, these janitors now have the opportunity to bargain for greater respect and recognition for the personal sacrifices they made to keep Somerville's economy open and running during that time; and

WHEREAS: Essential workers and their unions, through collective bargaining and public advocacy, have a powerful means of not only improving their own conditions but uplifting all workers and working families in one of the most expensive metropolitan areas in the country; and

WHEREAS: The 32BJ SEIU master janitorial agreement will expire after midnight on November 15, 2023;
NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT

RESOLVED: That the Somerville City Council stands in solidarity with the janitors of 32BJ SEIU and calls upon building owners as well as other janitorial clients in Somerville to support the janitors in reaching their goals in these negotiations and to work with their cleaning contractors to offer strong standards in the next master agreement.