

Teamsters, Labor and Community Supporters Stage Rally for Baumann Bus Workers



Saturday, October 17, 2009

(Farmingdale, NY)— Teamsters General President Jim Hoffa pledged his support for the more than 1,700 Long Island school bus workers who are fighting for respect at Baumann Bus at a rally today.

The workers, who filed for an election with the National Labor Relations Board on October 5, are organizing with the Teamsters to gain respect, fair and equal treatment on the job and affordable health care.

"Every single one of you deserves to be respected in the workplace, and I'm here to tell you that the Teamsters Union is going to be your partner in this fight," Hoffa said. "We are here to tell the company that it is time recognize the valuable work their workers do."

Hundreds of Baumann workers rallied for respect with Hoffa and prominent political and community leaders, including Senator Chuck Schumer (D-NY); Rep. Steve Israel (D, 2nd); Leg. Bill Lindsay (Suffolk County, 8th Dist.); Leg. Kate Browning (Suffolk County, 3rd Dist.); Leg. David Mejias (Nassau County); and John Durso, President of the Long Island Federation of Labor.

Several drivers, driver assistants and mechanics addressed the crowd at the rally, demanding respect from their employer, Ronald Baumann. Baumann who owns the four transportation companies—Baumann & Sons, Acme Bus, Alert Coach and Brookset Bus—where workers are organizing with Teamsters Local 1205.

"I know lots of parents at this company who can't afford medicine for their sick kids. We shouldn't have to choose between being healthy and being able to pay the bills," said Debbie Masching, a 30-year bus driver and mother of two who works at the Copiague yard. "We will never get the respect we deserve at Baumann unless we have a strong union backing us up. With the Teamsters I know we will win that respect!"

"We're here today because we need a change. We have an important job carrying people's children. We are the heart of this company and we don't get respect. I am confident that we will get that respect with the Teamsters," said Pamela Mason, a driver at Baumann's Bohemia yard.

"I look forward to representing the workers at Baumann Bus," said Teamsters Local 1205 President Tim Lynch.

"Together we are going to win this election and negotiate a strong Teamster contract that addresses your concerns."