



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

DANE COUNTY BOARD SIGNALS SUPPORT OF OPEIU 39 WORKERS AT CUNA MUTUAL GROUP

Madison, WI – At their meeting on March 16th, 2023, the Dane County Board overwhelmingly passed 2022 RES-371, a resolution supporting the Union at CUNA Mutual Group (CMG). The resolution, “*Supporting Bargaining Between OPEIU Local 39 and CUNA Mutual Group*”, was introduced by supervisor Heidi Wegleitner and co-sponsored by supervisors Wright, Chawla, Ritt, Hueselmann, Bollig, Doolan, Hatcher, and Bare. Following testimony by OPEIU Local 39 workers and community members, a roll call vote was taken: 24 AYE to 1 NAY. Supervisor Weigand was the lone NO vote.

Union members’ testimonies included explanation of the issues that lay at the heart of contract negotiations with CUNA Mutual Group. Teuta Resad, an employee at CMG for the past 24 years, explained that the Company refused to implement Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) practices for union workers: “The Company’s lawyers told our bargaining team that giving the union access to the data would open the Company to liability. For the non-represented staff, they conduct [DEI] pay reviews behind closed doors. If pay equity reviews are being done ethically, then they should do them for all employees.”

Chief Steward Joe Evica was recently placed on suspension by the Company this week pending an investigation, which may lead to his termination. The Union has stated that this is direct retaliation for union activities and filed an Unfair Labor Practice charge with the National Labor Relations Board (NLRB). “I’m here to say that my co-workers won’t be intimidated. I won’t be intimidated. And we’re going to continue to fight until we receive a fair contract,” Evica said.

Resolution co-sponsor Michele Doolan commented before the vote, “A company’s image is one of its most valuable assets within the community, and a failure to give effective recognition to the right of collective bargaining does nothing to change my view of CMG. It makes me wonder if they’re even aware of the not-so-hidden trending increase of hiring contract workers that ‘coincidentally’ reduce the number of union-represented employees over time.”

Supervisor Aaron Collins, who represents the district where CMG is located, stated, “I am concerned about the recent actions at CUNA, which are not the pro-worker actions of an employer I would expect in Dane County.”

Supervisor Engelberg commented, “I have been a union member for 44 years, and a labor leader for many of those years. I have seen corporate greed take over this country. We need some strong labor reform in this country. We need workers to be able to bargain on a level playing field. This is getting ridiculous these days.

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