

# UNITEHERE! Local 5

For Immediate Release  
Press Release

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## **UNITE HERE! Local 5 Negotiations Update** *Hawai'i Hotel Workers Rising: Lifting One Another Above the Poverty Line*

**Honolulu**—Members of UNITE HERE! Local 5 met today at the Neal S. Blaisdell Arena to discuss recent updates to contract negotiations currently taking place between UNITE HERE! Local 5 and the major hotels in Waikiki. In an overwhelming show of solidarity and support, hundreds of members of Local 5's Citywide Organizing Committee met and gave Eric Gill, Local 5 Financial Secretary-Treasurer, the authority to call a strike authorization vote for the Hilton Hawaiian Village and the Sheratons in Waikiki. Gill immediately called a strike authorization vote for Wednesday, August 23, 2006 at the Blaisdell Arena.

Maria Salantes, a housekeeper at the Hilton Hawaiian Village for 24 years said, "For too long we have worked hard and showed respect to our employer without receiving the respect we deserve in return. Hilton's proposals do not address the real problems caused by the increased work for housekeepers. We are tired of being treated this way."

"Our hotels have changed since I started 34 years ago. We all work for multi-national, mainland corporations now. We have to stand together and defend Hawaii's future," said Mason Chung, a bartender at the Sheraton Waikiki who started in 1972.

"The Filipino community in Hawaii will continue to honor the struggles, sacrifices, and accomplishments of the sakadas by supporting the struggles of their counterpart today – the hotel, restaurant and tourism workers, and the community must stand with them," said Raymund Liongson, a leader in Oahu's Filipino community and assistant professor of Philippine Studies at Leeward Community College. "It is inspiring to know that Local 5 is committed to accomplishing good for the community by solving problems that affect many of Hawaii's working families and by sharing in the values that we as a community take pride in," Liongson added.

Eric Gill, Financial Secretary-Treasurer for UNITE HERE Local 5 said, "I am proud of our leaders and the courage they showed today to stand up for a better future for Hawaii's people. Hawaii deserves middle class jobs from its number one industry. Our children deserve a future in Hawaii."

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