



New York State Senator Brad Hoylman

Labor Day Spotlight

This Labor Day, I am more committed than ever to ensuring our state and our city remain leaders in protecting workers' rights and fighting for economic justice. Below is an update on just some of my recent efforts in the Senate and in our community to address these issues.

Supporting Budget Wins for Working Families

This year's New York State Budget included many victories for working families that I have long advocated for in Albany, including an increase in the minimum wage and a statewide paid family leave. An agreement was reached to raise the minimum wage, which numerous studies show will help lift New Yorkers out of poverty while providing an economic stimulus. Through incremental annual increases, New York City will reach \$15 by 2018, while the rest of the state will phase in wage increases over a longer period of time. The budget also included the nation's most comprehensive paid family leave program, allowing full-time and part-time workers who have been in their jobs for at least six months to take up to 12 weeks off to care for a baby or ill family member.



Standing with Verizon Workers on the Picket Line

On April 18, I joined Verizon workers striking outside of Verizon headquarters on West 36th Street. For nearly a year prior, the Communications Workers of America (CWA) and the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers (IBEW) attempted to get Verizon to sit down at the bargaining table without forcing major reductions in pension coverage, family leave and disability benefits. At a time when Verizon is making record profits, workers in New York and across the country deserved a fair contract without severe givebacks. On May 6, I wrote a letter to Verizon CEO and Chairman Lowell McAdam urging Verizon to help end the strike by negotiating in good faith without threatening reductions in benefits that are critical for working families. Verizon, CWA, and IBEW reached an agreement at the end of May.

Demanding that B&H Respect Workers' Rights

In November, I organized a letter signed by elected leaders urging B&H Photo Video to voluntarily recognize a union supported by a strong majority of its 240 warehouse workers. Out of respect for the important role that warehouse workers play in B&H Photo Video's operations, we urged management to recognize the workers' right to collective bargaining and to publicly commit to refraining from intimidation, mass firings, and other anti-union tactics. United Steelworkers District 4 won their representation election shortly thereafter.



Applauding NLRB Decision on Graduate Workers

I've been proud to stand with graduate student workers since my first months as State Senator, when I joined Graduate Student Organizing Committee (GSOC)-UAW Local 2110 at New York University (NYU) to urge then University President John Sexton to hold a representation election and voluntarily recognize GSOC, which NYU did later that year. However, under the 2004 *Brown* decision, the National Labor Relations Board (NLRB) still did not consider graduate student workers to be statutory employees under the National Labor Relations Act (NLRA). When the Graduate Workers of Columbia (GWC)-UAW Local 2110 challenged *Brown* this past year, I signed a letter with my colleagues at all levels of government urging Columbia to respect their graduate workers' right to organize. Last month, I was glad to see the NLRB set a new precedent in the 3-1 *Columbia* decision, which recognized that graduate student workers at private universities are entitled to the worker protections of the NLRA. This landmark decision will support organizing by unions in my district such as GSOC at NYU and Student Employees at the New School (SENS).

For more information about Senator Hoylman's efforts to protect workers' rights, please feel free to contact his Chief Counsel and Policy Director Burton Phillips at burton@bradhoylman.com.

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