

International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers

Local Union 21

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October 3, 2013

All DirectSat Workers
Address 1
City, ST ZIP

Dear Worker:

As you know, a petition for a union representation election was filed with the NLRB (National Labor Relations Board) on September 19, 2013 on behalf of technicians at DirectSat's Mokena facility. The petition was filed after a majority of you signed the petition requesting to be represented by IBEW Local Union 21. This was only made possible through the will and determination of the Mokena techs that have decided to stand together and fight for their legal rights.

As part of the process, the NLRB expects that before you file a petition for an election you will ask the employer for voluntary recognition, which would eliminate the need for an election. The petition was filed only after management rejected to simply recognize your request to be represented by Local 21 by a majority of signatures. DirectSat management made it clear that they are not concerned about the needs of anything but their bottom line.

As suspected, the bosses denied your right to a quick process to bargain a fair contract and delayed the election by claiming that the only fair bargaining unit would include Chicago North. While we welcome all workers looking for workplace justice; until last week, we had no way to know if techs at Chicago North *wanted* to be represented by the IBEW. They had not made it known to us whether or not they wish to be represented, which makes agreeing to the company's demand to include them very difficult. In this situation, the NLRB will hold a hearing to decide if the upcoming election should include Chicago North or if it should be Chicago South techs only, as petitioned.

Hopefully, you already know that IBEW Local 21 filed Unfair Labor Practice (ULP) charges against DirectSat on August 19, 2013. The charges were filed due to DirectSat management's illegal activity, including interrogating employees about union activities and the unlawful termination of Danny Bravo. The Regional Director of the NLRB has decided that the processing of the petition for election will be delayed until a decision can be made on the Unfair Labor Practice charges. That means the hearing date that was initially scheduled to decide who is included in the vote is delayed and will be rescheduled once the ULP's have been resolved.

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We also think you should know that DirectSat has hired a union busting attorney to undermine your efforts to form a union. His name is Greg Andrews, from the law firm Jackson-Lewis. The firm advertises one of their services as “Labor and Preventative practices”, in other words union busting. Mr. Andrews is described as follows:

In his labor law representation of employers, Mr. Andrews successfully guides employers through union organizing attempts via on-site coaching and training of supervisors and management in addition to representation before the NLRB.

DirectSat hired a union buster in an attempt to make sure that your decision to form a union is squashed. Union busters use fear and intimidation tactics, like those you’ve already seen in company correspondence, to convince workers that forming a union is hopeless. Mr. Andrews was hired to teach the bosses how to make you believe that you will never gain anything in a collective bargaining agreement. In fact, they have even gone as far as to try and tell you that you could lose something in collective bargaining. If you could get less don’t you think management would be in favor? If this were really true why are they spending so much time, money and energy to convince you? Don’t be fooled!

As Mr. Andrews teaches the bosses how to convince you that they want you to have “all of the facts” about unions and union organizing; it should be clear that they are looking out for their best interest; not your best interest. The real reason that the company opposes your right to form a union is that it shifts some of the power to YOU and changes a dictator-like relationship to democracy in the workplace.

With your wages, hours and working conditions written into a legally binding union contract DirectSat will be forced to consider your needs when making decisions that affect you and your family; like health care costs. They are trying to convince you that you will never gain anything by forming a union and that only management can solve your issues. You must remember that if that were true, they could have made your lives easier years ago...so why now?

The reason they are acting as if they care about you NOW is because you are talking about acting collectively to form a union. Any improvement they make today can be taken away at the will of the boss, unless it is in a legally binding Collective Bargaining Agreement (CBA). We can beat the union busters by sticking together and staying focused on the reasons that made you decide to go union in the first place.

Forming a union in the workplace isn’t about DirectSat, it isn’t about the IBEW, it’s about YOU! The National Labor Relations Act (NLRA) says it is the will of the employees that decides whether or not you choose to be represented by a union. Don’t let anyone else decide for you! Don’t be bullied by misleading information, half-truths and outright lies written by their anti-worker attorney.

It’s our Solidarity vs. Theirs! If we stick together we win together.

In Solidarity,



David E. Webster
Business Representative/Organizer
IBEW Local Union 21, AFL-CIO