



Chicago Workers' Collaborative

Chicago * Rolling Meadows * Waukegan

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**** PRESS RELEASE ****

For Immediate Release

Thursday, July 14, 2011

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Rolling Meadows Community Supports Fired Taco Bell Workers

Deliver Petition Signed by 250 Community Resident to Franchise Owner

Rolling Meadows, IL - Three former employees of Taco Bell in Rolling Meadows returned to the fast food restaurant today where they had labored for years until they were fired without warning in June 2011. The women came back to give Taco Bell one more chance to treat them with fairness and respect. Supported by their community and the Chicago Workers' Collaborative, they demonstrated in front of the Taco Bell on Kirchoff Road with placards and banners calling for justice and for the community to not consume food tainted by labor exploitation.

Raul Trejo, a Catholic lay leader from Rolling Meadows, carried a long roll of signatures from local residents demanding that Barbara Lucas, owner of the Taco Bell franchise (QSR, Inc), meet with the women to at least offer them a fair severance. Almost immediately, a store manager came out to prohibit the women and community residents from entering the restaurant. When asked to come outside to receive the petition, the manager reportedly said he was too busy.

"Our community feels disrespected," said Raul Trejo, a Catholic lay leader from Rolling Meadows. "It's bad enough that Irma (one of the fired workers) worked at Taco Bell for 13 years and only was getting paid \$9.75 per hour. But then for a business in our community to fire her from one day to the next without justification or even a 'thank you', that's not the type of establishment that people in Rolling Meadows will support.

"Taco Bell doesn't care about it's employees, our families, or our community" said former employee Alicia Salazar. "They won't even come out to receive the community's petition."

Undeterred by the local Taco Bell's unwillingness to accept the petitions at its store, the workers and their supporters went to owner's corporate office (QSR, Inc) in Schaumburg. QSR operates 28 Taco Bell stores in Illinois, Iowa and Wisconsin. Upon entering QSR headquarters, neither the workers nor their supporters were asked to leave but were told that the owner, Barbara Lucas, could not accept the petition. They then unrolled the petition and spread it across the reception area before departing.

"Taco Bell should do less thinking outside of the bun and more thinking of how they treat their workers and the communities where they operate," said Chicago Workers Collaborative Executive Director, Leone Jose Bicchieri. "These women are members of our association and we call on Taco Bell to give a positive answer to the community's call for fairness."

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Chicago Workers' Collaborative is an organization of workers and institutions which seeks to raise standards for low-wage workers in the state of Illinois.