



# SEATTLE CITY COUNCIL

Frank Finneran  
Board Chair  
Washington State Convention Center Public Facilities District  
800 Convention Place  
Seattle, WA 98101-2350

Dear Mr. Finneran,

As Chairman of the Board which oversees the public benefits associated with the Washington State Convention Center, we are writing to express our support for the organizing efforts of live entertainment technicians who work in your venue.

It is our understanding that some of your event clients who rent your public facility engage Rhino Staging and PSAV to supply live event production labor. Last year, the riggers who are employed by Rhino NW won a certified NLRB election and the right to be represented. Rhino is violating Federal law by refusing to bargain with its employees and the NLRB has ruled that:

*By failing and refusing since August 17, 2015, to recognize and bargain with the Union as the exclusive collective-bargaining representative of the employees in the appropriate unit, the Respondent has engaged in unfair labor practices affecting commerce within the meaning of Section 8(a)(5) and (1) and Section 2(6) and (7) of the Act.*

Last year the regular and part-time audio-visual technicians of PSAV also won a certified NLRB election and the right to be represented. That decision was appealed by PSAV, and on May 19, 2016, the NLRB ruled that:

*The Employer's Request for Review of the Regional Director's Decision and Direction of Election and the Decision on Challenges and Objection and Certification of Representative is denied as it raises no substantial issues warranting review.*

As elected officials for the City of Seattle, we strongly support livable wages, secure employment, adequate health care and family friendly work scheduling. We believe that good faith negotiations between employers and represented employees are one of the best ways to achieve these goals. We are writing to express our concern that publicly owned facilities in Seattle are unwittingly abetting large national corporations to exploit area workers.

We have a particular concern for our more vulnerable residents and workers; those in our city at the lower end of the wage-earning spectrum. Rhino riggers have no job security, are subject to capricious work scheduling, have no health benefits and are compensated at hourly rates



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40% to 70% lower than local event-industry standards. PSAV audio-visual technicians are compensated at rates 60% to 75% lower than local standards, part time technicians have no health benefits and all these skilled technicians are scheduled to work in a manner that puts normal family life out of reach.

Live events in your venue cannot happen without these workers. Your venue's events provide a great deal of public benefit. They generate hotel/motel tax for the City, tourist spending, work for Convention Center staff and a great deal of revenue for the Convention Center itself. Providing fair pay to the workers who make such revenue generation possible is also a public benefit.

We urge you to request that event clients not contract with Rhino Staging or PSAV or any other concert labor provider who does not compensate its employees at prevailing industry standards.

Thank you for your consideration and for your efforts to improve the quality of life in our city.

Council President Bruce Harrell

Councilmember Sally Bagshaw

Councilmember Tim Burgess

Councilmember M. Lorena González

Councilmember Lisa Herbold

Councilmember Rob Johnson

Councilmember Debora Juarez

Councilmember Mike O'Brien

Councilmember Kshama Sawant