

UNITE HERE Local 11



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Thursday, December 2, 2010

Contact: Leigh Shelton, 213-481-8530 ext. 253 – UNITE HERE Local 11
Maria S. Quezada, Ph.D, 714-319-2500, CABE

Group Pulls Business from Boycotted Hyatt and Hilton Hotels in Long Beach

LONG BEACH – The California Association for Bilingual Education announced this week that it had terminated its contracts at the Long Beach Hyatt Regency and Long Beach Hilton as a result of on-going labor disputes and a boycott called at the two hotels.

CABE, a non-profit organization seeking to promote educational equity and achievement for students with diverse cultural, racial, and linguistic backgrounds, will hold its 36th annual conference in Long Beach on March 23-26, 2011. The contracts between CABE and the hotels were negotiated four years ago when there was no labor dispute between the hotels and the union. CABE had originally planned on using the Hyatt Regency for meeting space, food and beverage services and conference attendees' accommodations, but cancelled their plans after learning of the worker-called boycott. In addition, CABE planned to use the Hilton for guest accommodations, but cancelled its room block there also.

School districts, presenters, and our membership, many of whom are union members, made it clear to us that they would not attend our conference at hotels where there is ongoing labor disputes and a boycott." said Maria S. Quezada, CABE CEO. "It hasn't been easy for us to rearrange our conference plans, but it is important that we honor the requests of our members. It is also important that the children we serve have teachers in classrooms who know about the latest research and effective practices. That is why it is imperative that our invitees attend the conference held at the convention center and other venues in Long Beach. "

From training educators and parents to developing policy, one of CABE's core goals is to help English learners excel in the classroom. In many cases, these students are the very children of immigrant workers who take jobs in hotels like the Hyatt and Hilton, and struggle to make ends meet.

"CABE's work and that of our union is deeply connected," said Tom Walsh, president of UNITE HERE Local 11. "In UNITE HERE, we organize parents to earn a decent wage, have access to affordable healthcare and have a reasonable workload so they can adequately provide for their families. When a mother has to work two jobs because one isn't enough, she has little time left to be involved with her children's education."

“We applaud CABE for understanding this connection and moving its business to other Long Beach hotels,” Walsh continued.

At both the Hyatt and the Hilton, workers have complained of low-wages, unaffordable health benefits and high workloads that have in some cases led to on-the-job injuries. Earlier this month workers from the Hyatt Regency filed complaints with OSHA, reporting repetitive motion and other kinds of injuries sustained on the job.

For more information, please visit unitehere11.org or contact Leigh Shelton at lshelton@unitehere11.org.

###