

Brown University Community Council Meeting
Tuesday, April 14th, 2015
4:00 - 5:30pm

Hello. My name is Liliana Sampedro and I am a first year at Brown speaking on behalf of Brown Student Labor Alliance. Last year, the BUCC passed a resolution that supported hotel workers and their boycott of the Renaissance Providence Downtown hotel. It recommended that members of the Brown community refrain from holding events at the Renaissance, inform relevant event planning bodies of the ongoing labor dispute, and recommended that the University remove the Renaissance from promotional material for any events. Today, Brown Student Labor Alliance again asks for your support as we call attention to the current issue surrounding the Hilton Hotel. One worker was made to work more than fifteen hours a day without a break, while another was given an increase in the number of rooms to be cleaned per day after she requested it be lowered due to her pregnancy. There has been a history of chronic pain expressed by workers at the Hilton who say that they will be in pain their entire lives because of the speed and the quantity of work they are required to do on a daily basis. In addition, there has also been a history of disrespect towards these workers.

When workers began to get fed up with the abuse from managers and owners, they began to organize and 70% of the hotel's employees signed a petition demanding changes in the workplace and a fair process to join a union. Since the unionization effort began however, several workers involved have been unjustly punished with disciplinary action, others suspended, and several more have lost their jobs. Now, a majority of the workers are calling for a boycott of the Hilton Hotel.

We are calling on you, the Brown community, to help pressure the owners of the Hilton, Proccianti Group, in attempts to reach a solution to this boycott and serve worker justice. We ask that members of the Brown community refrain from holding events at the Providence Hilton Hotel, inform relevant events planning bodies of the ongoing boycott, and although it is not on the preferred providers list, we still believe it is important that the University supports this major action.

We believe that if Brown desires to present itself as a just and liberal institution, we feel that it is important to follow through with these beliefs when it matters most. It is important that the Providence community feels that an institution as powerful as this one can support them as they have done in the past. This fight is about stopping economic exploitation and ensuring that all workers are treated with the same dignity and respect that they deserve. Although we acknowledge that a resolution cannot be reached due to constraints of time, we still ask for your solidarity in this fight for justice.

Thank you.