



Justice at Smithfield
Official Document of Smithfield Justice Campaign
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Leading Civil Rights and Immigrant Rights Groups to Protest Smithfield Packing's Abuse of Workers at Annual Shareholder Meeting in Richmond

SCLC, National Baptist Organization, Major religious coalition pass resolutions demanding Smithfield respect human rights

Press availability and rally 11:30am Cedar Baptist Church, 2301 Cedar Street, Richmond followed by protest march

Smithfield Packing, headquartered in Smithfield, Virginia, is the target of a growing consumer campaign because of its abusive treatment of the over 5500 predominantly Latino and African American workers at its Tar Heel, North Carolina plant where workers have been fighting to organize a union for over 12 years.

For the first time in the company's history, civil rights organizations and national and local pastors will march and pray outside the shareholders meeting of Smithfield. In fiscal year 2005, Luter received a \$9,860,713 bonus. Adding to the company's mounting troubles, Smithfield may also be investigated for its use of a non attorney as its legal representative revealed the Wall Street Journal this week. The practice is illegal under Virginia law.

Recently resolutions against the company were passed by the national civil rights organization SCLC, the Progressive National Baptists and the Proctor Conference, a coalition of thousands of churches around the country. The resolutions demand that the company stop the intimidation of Smithfield workers at Tar Heel and respect their rights to organize a union. "We encourage Smithfield to negotiate a union contract to protect their human rights and ensure a safe workplace free of fear of retaliation." states a portion of the SCLC resolution passed earlier this month.

Smithfield, which at one time created its own private police force, was found by the National Labor Relations Board and the board's administrative law judges, under both Democratic and Republican Administrations, to have violated labor law by assaulting, intimidating, threatening and unlawfully firing its workers. On May 5th, 2006 the U.S. Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia circuit upheld a board ruling ordering the company to cease and desist.

Two reports from the internationally respected organization Human Rights Watch documented widespread abuse and dangerous conditions for workers. Workers testify that they are often fired when they become injured and denied workers' compensation.

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