

EMERYVILLE'S LIVING WAGE ORDINANCE

And the fight for justice at the Woodfin Hotel

Measure C: Raising standards in Emeryville

On Nov 8, 2005 Emeryville voters passed Measure C, a hospitality-industry living wage ordinance. The measure, which was supported by UNITE HERE Local 2850, Alameda Central Labor Council, and the East Bay Alliance for a Sustainable Economy (EBASE), guarantees workers a living wage, reasonable workload limits and job security when hotels change management.

Measure C:

- *Requires hotels with more than 50 guest rooms to pay all employees a minimum wage of \$9 per hour and an average wage of \$11 per hour for all non-managerial employees.*
- *Requires overtime pay for workers who clean more than 5,000 square feet of floor space.*

There are four hotels in Emeryville covered by Measure C:

- *Woodfin Suites, Four Points by Sheraton, Courtyard Marriott, Hilton Garden Inn*

Measure C: Results

Measure C went into effect at the end of 2005 and has been repeatedly upheld in court. The City of Emeryville monitors hotels each year to make sure they are in compliance.

- *At the **Marriott Courtyard Hotel**, housekeepers are now making \$3 to \$5 more than they earned before Measure C.*
- *At the **Hilton Garden Inn**, housekeepers have won reduced workloads and more support staff.*
- *Even the **Woodfin Suites Hotel**, which vehemently opposed Measure C, eventually reduced housekeeping workloads under strong pressure from the community. Woodfin workers cleaned up to 17 multi-room suites a day before Measure C; they now clean 9 or 10 suites, with a safer and healthier pace of work.*

Key issues:

What's at stake in the Woodfin dispute: Under Measure C, if a hotel assigns housekeepers more rooms than the law allows, it must pay the workers time-and-a-half. For most of the year after Measure C passed, Woodfin managers assigned workloads far above what the law allowed – an investigation by the City of Emeryville found that workloads were too high on 80-90% of the workdays in early 2006. However, workers never received time-and-a-half wages (See the **TIMELINE** for further information on key dates in the enforcement process).

A word about Social security no match letters:

In April 2007, the Woodfin fired 12 worker leaders, claiming they couldn't correct social security no-match letters. Yes, the Woodfin received a Social Security "no-match" letter concerning some of its workers. But under current law, these letters specifically state that they are no indication of immigration status, and that employers are not supposed to fire workers just on the basis of receiving one. In fact, the Woodfin ignored the letter when it first arrived in April 2006, and only took action against the workers six months later, after they had begun to stand up for their rights under Measure C.