



Cade Watanabe, Financial Secretary-Treasurer

Gemma G. Weinstein, President

Eric W. Gill, Senior Vice-President

Wednesday, August 28, 2024

Sisters, Brothers & Union Siblings,

I write to you to share some additional information related to our possible hotel strike on Oahu and Kauai. To date, eight of our Hawaii hotels affecting more than 5,000 Local 5 members employed by Hilton, Hyatt, Marriott & Kyo-ya have authorized strikes. Our contracts expired on June 30th. We initiated negotiations with all four major employers in April 2024, with more than 700 Local 5 members present for bargaining. Since then, we have made little to no progress on our core demands – wages that help us get ahead and not just get by, enough money to secure our benefits, and a process that holds our bosses accountable to staffing and workload issues that directly correlate to our ability to provide the quality of service our guests deserve.

Currently, no new bargaining dates have been set, and we anticipate being on strike very soon. And our members in Hawaii are not alone. Hotel workers in 10 other cities across the U.S. have also authorized strikes at Hilton, Hyatt, Marriott, and Omni properties including Baltimore, Boston, Greenwich, New Haven, Oakland, Providence, San Diego, San Francisco, San Jose, and Seattle.

Our commitment to the 'house of labor,' these islands we all call home, to our guests who deserve nothing less than to experience our 'aloha' so they keep coming back, and to our families runs deep in all of us. We wholeheartedly believe that we need tourism to work for all of us. We're tired of being taken for granted as our hotel owners and operators cheapen our brand and undermine the value of our work.

Despite what you may read in the media, Hawaii's hospitality industry is in crisis, not because of workers or the pandemic that ended more than two years ago or even the changing demographic of our guests – we're in crisis because of the lack of respect and care our offshore hotel owners and mainland companies have for all of us. They don't care if our guests pay more for less. They don't care if we're understaffed. And they don't care about the quality or level of service we're able to provide our guests.

On behalf of our entire membership, thank you. I appreciate all your demonstrations of solidarity and offers of support. I know that some of you have already moved or postponed your meetings/events and made it known to our hotels that should a strike be called, you and your members will not cross any picket lines. Thank you for your ongoing understanding & help and should you have any questions, please don't hesitate to reach me on my cell at 808-896-1502 or visit our website for updates (www.unitehere5.org).

Sincerely and fraternally yours,

Cade M. Watanabe
Financial Secretary-Treasurer