

New York City educators call for unified struggle with striking Hunts Point market workers!

**New York City Educators Rank-and-File Safety Committee
21 January 2021**

We, the members of the New York City Educators Rank-and-File Safety Committee, express our full support for the 1,400 striking workers at the Hunts Point produce market. We call for the broadest possible mobilization to expand this strike among educators, logistics and transportation workers, health care workers, and all other sections of the working class.

Our brothers and sisters at Hunts Point have taken a courageous stand for the rights of workers everywhere. They have worked strenuously and even sacrificed their lives to help procure food for 22 million people amid the pandemic, and have been paid poverty wages in return. At least six Hunts Point workers have died from COVID-19 and over 400 have been infected.

We denounce the brutal assault carried out on Tuesday by the NYPD on the striking workers. The attack on these workers, who were exercising their democratic right to protest their working conditions, stands in stark contrast to the behavior of the Capitol Police in Washington D.C. on January 6, who allowed a fascist mob to storm the Capitol in an attempted coup. It is now known that this mob included members of the NYPD and many others from police departments across the United States.

At stake in this strike is far more than the modest \$1 more an hour that workers are rightfully demanding.

Over 400,000 people have died from COVID-19 in the United States alone. Tens of millions have lost their jobs, are food insecure and face the threat of eviction. Meanwhile, the wealth of American billionaires has grown by \$1 trillion during the pandemic.

The premature reopening of the economy and the hand-outs to the rich have been a bipartisan policy. The Democratic administrations of Andrew Cuomo and Bill

de Blasio bear particular responsibility for the criminal handling of the pandemic in New York City, which has claimed over 26,000 lives. Governor Andrew Cuomo has insisted that the “cost” of another shutdown would be “too high,” while President Joseph Biden has pledged to reopen schools and to keep the economy open as he takes office.

In the struggle against these policies, workers cannot depend on the unions. Jimmy Hoffa, the president of the Teamsters, which has called the Hunts Point strike, was a member of the panel that advised President Donald Trump on reopening the economy throughout the past year. The United Federation of Teachers (UFT) has made possible the premature reopening of schools. Despite the widespread sympathy for the Hunts Point workers on strike, the Teamsters, the UFT, the Transport Workers Union (TWU), and all the other unions have isolated their struggle.

As workers, we cannot accept the policy of death and poverty demanded by the ruling class, which puts profits over lives. Schools and nonessential businesses must be closed immediately, with full income to displaced workers! Essential workers must be guaranteed full protection and good wages!

The Hunts Point strike must become the starting point for a counteroffensive by workers in New York, across the US and internationally. Our committee pledges to do everything we can to broaden this strike among educators and the entire working class. We encourage workers on strike at Hunts Point to contact us today and form an independent rank-and-file committee to carry forward your struggle!



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