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Title: WHEREAS, cleaners at commercial office buildings, universities, and other facilities are essential workers, without whom Pittsburgh could not function; and,

Sponsors: Bobby Wilson, All Members

Indexes: PROCLAMATION - MR. WILSON

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WHEREAS, cleaners at commercial office buildings, universities, and other facilities are essential workers, without whom Pittsburgh could not function; and,

WHEREAS, cleaners, hotel workers, and other essential workers continued to work throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, sacrificing themselves to keep buildings running without even receiving hazard pay; and,

WHEREAS, this fall, union contracts covering nearly 70,000 commercial office cleaners, including nearly 1,500 SEIU 32BJ members working as cleaners throughout the City of Pittsburgh and Allegheny County, will expire; and,

WHEREAS, UNITE HERE Local 57 represents over 1,300 hospitality workers across eight properties in Downtown Pittsburgh; and,

WHEREAS, during the COVID-19 pandemic, hotel workers suffered and persisted through widespread layoffs, dangerous working conditions, and uncertain futures marked by grim economic prospects and dire health outcomes; and,

WHEREAS, hotels provide great economic benefit to Downtown Pittsburgh, but cannot function without working people, who need livable wages and safe working conditions to survive; and,

WHEREAS, over 550 UNITE HERE Local 57 members at Omni William Penn Hotel, Renaissance Pittsburgh Hotel, Westin Convention Center, and the Wyndham Grand are fighting for fair contracts which provide economic security and dignity; and,

WHEREAS, all these workers head to the bargaining table during a period of historic economic change, with the COVID-19 pandemic and remote work transforming Downtown Pittsburgh in challenging ways; and,

WHEREAS, Pittsburgh's Central Business District, where thousands of service workers, including over 3,000 SEIU 32BJ and Unite Here members, work, is the economic driver of our region, but growing commercial office vacancy rates and stagnating occupancy rates are a threat to the economic health of our city; and,

WHEREAS, the growing public health crisis facing our downtown community also calls for urgent action and creative, humane interventions to maintain a safe, clean, and vibrant Downtown Pittsburgh community for all; and,

WHEREAS, these complex issues must be addressed together so that we invest in our city's workers while also rebuilding our economy and strengthening social services and housing options.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Council of the City of Pittsburgh stands with the hardworking members of SEIU 32BJ and UNITE HERE Local 57 in their demand for fair contracts including living wages, strong health benefits, and employer-funded retirement security; and,

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Council of the City of Pittsburgh calls upon cleaning contractors, property managers, building owners, and hotel owners and operators to ensure that strong contracts are negotiated, reflecting the essential role these workers play in our city; and,

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Council of the City of Pittsburgh recognizes that the strength of our regional economy depends on a healthy Downtown Pittsburgh; and,

FINALLY, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Council of the City of Pittsburgh commits to working together with the Office of the Mayor and all Downtown Pittsburgh stakeholders to ensure that our Central Business District is a clean, safe, and vibrant community for all who live, work, and visit.