SERVICE EMPLOYEES INTERNATIONAL UNION

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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WACKENHUT FOUND TO COME UP SHORT ON WORKERS’ WAGES,
SAYS LABOR DEPARTMENT

Billion Dollar Security Firm Admits Breaking the Law

Philadelphia, Pa. - As a result of a federal investigation triggered by a wage and hour complaint filed by Officer Charles Wilson, an employee of Wackenhut Services Inc. working at the Independence National Historical Park, the company informed their employees at that site this week that they will be receiving back pay owed to them by law. The workers have not been paid their proper rate since October 1, 2006, according to a memo distributed to the workers by Wackenhut G4S. The acknowledgement came after an investigation initiated after Wilson’s complaint by the federal Department of Labor.

Charles Wilson, a Wackenhut security officer who protects the Liberty Bell, filed the federal wage and hour complaint against the company accusing Wackenhut of shortchanging employees of at least 14 cents an hour in fringe benefits. Under federal law, Wackenhut was mandated to pay employees at the Liberty Bell site $3.01 per hour in such benefits since at least October 1, 2006, but the company was only paying workers $2.87.

“The security officers who protect the Liberty Bell should be paid enough to support their families,” said Wayne MacManiman, Jr., Local 32BJ’s Mid-Atlantic District Chairman. “They ensure the safety of tens of thousands of visitors and deserve fair compensation for their hard work.”

In July, U.S. Senator Bob Casey (D-PA) urged federal officials to re-examine business dealings with Wackenhut G4S, the federal government’s largest private security contractor for some of the nation’s most sensitive sites, including federal nuclear installations, public transit systems, and the Liberty Bell itself. That same month, the company was the subject of a congressional hearing conducted by Edolphus Towns (D-New York), chair of the Subcommittee on Government Management, Organization, and Procurement. The hearing on government contracts was titled “Contracting: Do Poor Performers Keep Winning?”

Wackenhut Services Inc. is an entity of Wackenhut G4S, the U.S. subsidiary of the foreign-owned G4S, a global multinational security company headquartered in London, England.

With more than 85,000 members in six states, including 5,000 in Philadelphia, Local 32BJ is the largest property services union in the country.

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