

From: [Nicole Knudsen](#)
To: [Clerk General](#); [Council Clerk – Testimony](#)
Subject: FW: Concerns regarding City's Harrison Square lease renewal
Date: Tuesday, February 15, 2022 5:38:18 PM
Attachments: [Concerns re Harrison Square lease - SEIU Local 49 - 02.15.22.pdf](#)

Hello,

SEIU Local 49 would like the attached letter included in the meeting materials for tomorrow's Council meeting (the letter is responsive to Item 96 on the February 16th, 2022 consent agenda).

Thank you,

Nicole Knudsen (*she/her*)

Strategic Researcher

Service Employees International Union, Local 49

Cell# 415-425-7373

From: Nicole Knudsen

Sent: Tuesday, February 15, 2022 5:35 PM

To: mayorwheeler@portlandoregon.gov

Cc: joann@portlandoregon.gov; Comm.Rubio@portlandoregon.gov;

MappsOffice@portlandoregon.gov; CommissionerRyanOffice@portlandoregon.gov; Maggie Long <maggiel@seiu49.org>; Felisa Hagins <FelisaH@seiu49.org>; Yasmin Ibarra <yasmini@seiu49.org>

Subject: Concerns regarding City's Harrison Square lease renewal

Dear Mayor Wheeler,

Please see the attached letter regarding our concerns and disappointment with the City's lease renewal at Harrison Square, sent on behalf of SEIU Local 49 Executive Director Maggie Long.

Thank you,

Nicole Knudsen (*she/her*)

Strategic Researcher

Service Employees International Union, Local 49

Cell# 415-425-7373

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Mayor Ted Wheeler
City of Portland
1221 SW 4th Ave, Room 340
Portland, OR 97204

RE: Commercial lease renewal for the Fire & Police Disability and Retirement Board in Harrison Square

February 15th, 2022

Dear Mayor Wheeler,

On behalf of the nearly 15,000 janitors, security officers, and healthcare workers of the Service Employees International Union, Local 49, I am writing to express our frustration and disappointment with the City's lease renewal for the Fire & Police Disability and Retirement Board in Harrison Square, a building that replaced its long-time union janitors with a low road contractor in early 2020.

Every City expenditure is an opportunity to ensure taxpayer dollars are doing as much as possible for our communities. When the City leases space in buildings cleaned and secured by union janitors and security officers, the City is ensuring that *all* jobs created by public dollars are good jobs. Responsible union contractors create jobs that include fair wages and benefits, provide workers with a voice on the job, and prioritize health and safety measures— and they add clear value to the City's investment by ensuring high quality service and stability resulting from lower worker turnover.

In contrast, leasing space in buildings cleaned and secured by low-cost contractors that offer lower wages and benefits can put taxpayers' investment at risk by exposing City offices to inconsistent cleaning quality and diminished safety and security due to higher rates of turnover.

This lease renewal is particularly upsetting as it comes at a time when low wage workers – and particularly Black and indigenous workers of color and frontline essential workers like janitors – have borne the brunt of the pandemic's challenges and inequities. Moving forward, we ask that the City meet with us to continue this discussion and to ensure that the City employ higher scrutiny and exhibit a greater commitment to responsible City leasing.

We would like to schedule a meeting or a phone call at your earliest convenience. Please feel free to reach out with any questions and to schedule a time to further this conversation.

Sincerely,

Maggie Long
Executive Director
SEIU, Local 49
Ph #: 503-236-4949, x 256
maggiel@seiu49.org

cc: Commissioner Jo Ann Hardesty
Commissioner Carmen Rubio
Commissioner Mingus Mapps
Commissioner Dan Ryan
Tom Rinehart, Chief Administrative Officer

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