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An Open Letter to Sunoco

Toledo Refinery
Sunoco, Inc.
Mr. James Keeler
P.O. Box 1014
Toledo, OH 43697

March 2, 2010

Dear Mr. Keeler

As members of the community throughout Northwest Ohio, it is with a great deal of sadness we write this letter. Sunoco has a deep history with Toledo; circa, all the way back to 1895. We have partnered in many ways over the years to make our community a strong and vibrant one. As a community we have stood side-by-side with Sunoco during both prosperous and challenging times. Now it appears you are willing to turn your back on us for short-term economic gain during an extremely difficult period for our community and its citizen workers.

Sunoco's decision to use an out-of-state contractor to perform shutdown work at the Toledo Refinery jeopardizes that trust and partnership. This contractor plans to use an out-of-state workforce whether it is only 50 jobs as you claim, or 100 or more – either way we find this appalling. Outsourcing jobs is killing our local economy, particularly during a time of serious recession for all of Northwest Ohio. It was recently announced that Toledo is the 8th poorest city in the nation!

Many construction workers in the Toledo area, including right here in East Toledo and Oregon, are suffering unemployment at rates of more than 30%. These highly skilled and trained local workers historically man your shutdowns and perform routine maintenance and capital improvement projects for the Sunoco Toledo Refinery. We strongly support these workers because they are our neighbors, friends and families.

On the surface it appears to us that this is all about money. It is recognized by most people that refineries are not the most popular neighbors in a community because of the odors, noise, heavy traffic and dangerous processes involved with refining oil. However, communities will put up with these inconveniences because the trade off to the local community is the benefit of employment opportunities as well as tax revenue. We request that you reconsider this contract award. We understand that you have a corporate responsibility to your shareholders. On the other hand, we are appealing to your social responsibility to make the right decision on behalf of your refinery neighbors and this community. We hope to hear from you soon.

Your Concerned Community,

Jobs with Justice is a national campaign for workers' rights. More than 40 local JWW coalitions made up of labor, faith based, community and student organizations are building power and winning victories for workers and their communities.

Interfaith Worker Justice calls upon our religious values in order to educate, organize, and mobilize the religious community in the U.S. on issues and campaigns that will improve wages, benefits, and working conditions for workers, especially low-wage workers.

Bob Lynn Jr. --- Secretary JWW