

June 20, 2013

Robert A. Harris, President & CEO
CLASS, Incorporated
One Parker Street
Lawrence, MA 01843

Dear CEO Harris & Members of the Board:

Human services are a critical part of our community. **It is important to all of us that people with disabilities and those facing mental health challenges receive quality supports – in an inclusive environment – with the right to make choices that affect their lives.**

That's why we support workers at ARC affiliate CLASS, Inc. who voted to form a union with SEIU Local 509, the Human Service Workers' Union on May 29. **Yet, rather than respect the clear majority vote of CLASS employees, your management team apparently has chosen to expend untold thousands of dollars on consultants and attorneys to stifle the voices of the very workers who provide services to people with disabilities in our community.** Making matters worse, several human service workers have reported unjust, retaliatory discipline from CLASS management following their support of their union and the union's victory.

These stall tactics and retaliatory efforts will do nothing to address workers' concerns over health, safety and working conditions at CLASS – nor will they improve the quality of care provided to people with disabilities in the Merrimack Valley. Instead, your efforts appear to draw vital resources away from the agency's core human service mission and the families you serve in our community.

We are calling on you to respect the majority vote of your workers to form a union, put an end to any retaliatory actions, and negotiate a contract with workers at CLASS, Inc. in good faith. Only together can we move forward with the important work of providing the highest quality care to all CLASS clients in the Merrimack Valley.

Please do the right thing for your organization, your workers and your community. It is vitally important that we arrive on a positive, productive resolution immediately.

On behalf of concerned faith and community leaders throughout the Merrimack Valley,

Councilor Sandy Almonte, Lawrence City Council
John Cave, Lawrence Human Rights Commission
Rosemarie Buxton, Merrimack Valley Project & Christ's Church
Luke Hill, Merrimack Valley Project
Pastor Victor Jarvis, Ebenezer Christian Church & Lawrence Human Rights Commission
Annia Lember, Lawrence Human Rights Commission
Susan Winning, UMass Lowell