

Pittsburgh City Council



Proclamation



WHEREAS, Pittsburgh is a city with a rich history of working people standing together to form unions in order to create good, family-sustaining jobs building our historic, 20th century middle class in the process; and

WHEREAS, Pittsburgh is a cornerstone in the history of America's middle class, the home of the Great Steel Strike of 1919 and the Homestead Strike of 1892, a town where our grandmothers and grandfathers struggled with the region's largest employers to create an equitable and just society for themselves and for their children; and

WHEREAS, the University of Pittsburgh Medical Center, now the region's largest employer, as well as the largest healthcare system and recipient of taxpayer-supported charitable tax-exemptions in the City, has a responsibility to our community to live up to our shared economic values; and

WHEREAS, last summer workers faced an aggressive and hostile anti-union campaign waged by UPMC executives and managers to harass and intimidate its employees who were standing together with their co-workers to have a voice and to sustain middle class jobs for themselves and all working people in Pittsburgh. UPMC officials declared the allegations of violations of workers' rights to form a union false and "a complete fabrication"; and

WHEREAS, after a seven month-long investigation, Region 6 of the National Labor Relations Board filed over 80 charges of alleged violations of Federal Labor Law against UPMC executives and managers, which included cases of workers being fired, unfairly disciplined, surveilled, and silenced after they talked about the union with their co-workers—they were told they could not speak about the union on or off the clock at work, or even in their own homes; and

WHEREAS, UPMC settled with the NLRB, agreeing to obey the law, respect the rights of workers to form a union free from harassment and intimidation, rescind any policies that do not follow the law, expunge the records of disciplined workers, and reinstate the fired workers with back pay; and

WHEREAS, Frank Lavelle and Ron Oakes, who were fired after they discussed unionizing, courageously stood together with their co-workers to hold UPMC accountable to Federal law, affirming their rights while also winning back their jobs; and

WHEREAS, Frank Lavelle and Ron Oakes returned to their jobs on Monday, February 25, 2013, proving again that there is great power when people stand together for what is right and just for our communities.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Council of the City of Pittsburgh supports their brave and principled stand on behalf of all the working people of Pittsburgh. Their fight for good middle class jobs at UPMC is vital to rebuilding the middle class of our region and to making sure everyone in our community realizes the prosperity and success of our economy. Just as we celebrate and honor the struggles and sacrifices of previous generations of Pittsburgh's workers to improve their lives and build a strong city, future generations will look back on the efforts of UPMC workers to do the same with pride and gratitude.

THEREFORE BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Council of the City of Pittsburgh does hereby declare Tuesday, March 12, 2013 to be **Frank Lavelle and Ron Oakes Day** in the City of Pittsburgh.

Sponsored by Councilwoman Natalia Rudiak

Co-Sponsored by Council President Darlene M. Harris and Councilmembers Rev. Ricky V. Burgess, Patrick Dowd, Theresa Kail-Smith, Bruce Kraus, R. Daniel Lavelle, Corey O'Connor, and William Peduto


Councilwoman Natalia Rudiak

Attest: Linda Johnson-Wasler
Clerk of Council



Darlene M. Harris
President of Council