



OFFICE OF THE BRONX BOROUGH PRESIDENT

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BOROUGH PRESIDENT

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June 9, 2009

Scott Cooper
St. Barnabas Hospital
East 183rd Street and Third Avenue
Bronx, New York 10457

Dear Dr. Cooper:

I am writing to express my support for the Committee of Interns and Residents currently attempting to organize at St. Barnabas Hospital, and to urge you not to appeal the National Labor Relations Board's recent decision to allow the formation of their union.

While I understand that the leadership of St. Barnabas Hospital considers its resident physicians to be students, and therefore unable to form a union, the findings of the NLRB's Region 2 Director Celeste J. Mattina make it clear that this is not the case.

Director Mattina found that resident physicians at St. Barnabas work up to 80 hours per week, that they examine patients and perform many procedures by themselves, and that part of the hospital's trauma team, and in fact the hospital's entire Rapid Response Team, is made up of resident physicians. Resident physicians are also responsible for collecting evidence when rape victims are brought to St. Barnabas, and your dental residents were found to be performing many of the procedures typically handled by their more tenured superiors.

As your staff has given them so much responsibility it is hard to believe these resident physicians could be considered students, rather than full employees of St. Barnabas Hospital. And while yes, they are still undergoing training, it is not uncommon for professionals at all levels, in all careers, to continue their education right up until they retire. By such a measurement, any of us could be considered students.

The resident physicians have made a legitimate case, and the NLRB agrees with them. I think the resources of St. Barnabas Hospital would be better spent on healthcare for the many Bronxites

who rely on your wonderful institution, rather than continuing the legal battle against these resident physicians.

While I am supporting the resident physicians in their fight to organize, I am not looking to be unfair to St. Barnabas Hospital. I and my office would be happy to mediate this dispute between both sides of this dispute, so that the residents may be treated appropriately while St. Barnabas continues to provide high-quality healthcare to all Bronx residents.

I look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,

Ruben Diaz Jr.
Bronx Borough President