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Cintas Alleges Extortion in New RICO Lawsuit Against Union Organizations

CINCINNATI--([BUSINESS WIRE](#))--[Cintas Corporation](#) (NASDAQ: CTAS) filed today a lawsuit under the federal and state Racketeer Influenced and Corrupt Organizations Statutes (RICO) against the labor unions UNITE HERE, International Brotherhood of Teamsters and Change to Win, alleging extortion related to the unions' continued attacks that are part of a nationwide organizing drive that is now entering its sixth year. The lawsuit was filed in the U.S. District Court for the Southern District of New York, and consolidates a related defamation lawsuit that Cintas filed in 2004 and which was proceeding in an Ohio state court.

Cintas alleges that, for the last five years, UNITE HERE and the other labor organizations have carried on a campaign of negative, untrue and unlawful attacks against Cintas in an effort to extort concessions from the company that would enable UNITE HERE and the Teamsters to become the official bargaining representatives for Cintas employees without those employees ever being able to freely decide whether they want a union and if so, which union. The company has long maintained that such rights belong to each individual employee, and has continually reiterated its commitments to protect its employees' rights.

The RICO complaint further alleges that UNITE HERE's and the other labor organizations' conduct is and continues to be, a campaign of extortion which includes interference with Cintas's existing and prospective business relationships, deliberate attacks to artificially depress the value of Cintas's stock, and other unlawful conduct.

The New York lawsuit also includes several claims against UNITE HERE for violation of Cintas's trademark rights, including improper use of Cintas's trade name and trademark in various websites designed to further the unions' extortion and reputation-destruction campaign.

The defamation claim details a 2004 news release issued by UNITE HERE – which was intentionally made to appear to have been issued by the U.S. government – accusing the company of “widespread and major” labor law violations. The union later acknowledged that the NLRB played no role in the issuance of the press release.

About Cintas Corporation:

Headquartered in Cincinnati, Ohio, Cintas Corporation provides highly specialized services to businesses of all types throughout North America. Cintas designs, manufactures and implements corporate identity uniform programs, and provides entrance mats, restroom supplies, promotional products, first aid and safety products, fire protection services and document management services to approximately 800,000 businesses. Cintas is a publicly held company traded over the Nasdaq National Market under the symbol CTAS, and is a Nasdaq-100 company and component of the Standard & Poor's 500 Index. The Company has achieved 38 consecutive years of growth in sales and earnings, to date.

An electronic version of the complaint and attachments is available on the Public Access to Court Electronic Records (PACER) website which can be accessed by clicking on the following link: https://pacer.login.uscourts.gov/cgi-bin/login.pl?court_id=00idx. You may also email a request for a copy of the complaint to trainerh@cintas.com.