



UAW files papers to represent Caesars workers

By MAYA RAO Staff Writer, (609) 272-7221

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ATLANTIC CITY — Employees at the world's largest gaming company and owner of four Atlantic City casinos are once more part of a union organizing drive — for the fourth time in nearly six months.

The United Auto Workers union filed papers Wednesday with the National Labor Relations Board to represent 160 full- and part-time cashiers and pit clerks and 33 full- and part-time slot technicians at the Harrah's Entertainment Inc. property Caesars Atlantic City. Filing a petition with the agency is the first step toward setting a union election date, and the UAW typically requires authorization cards from 60 percent to 65 percent of workers before doing so.

Caesars dealers in March voted 572-128 for the UAW.

Dealers at Bally's Atlantic City, another Harrah's Entertainment casino, in June voted 628-255 for the UAW — the same day that its security guards voted 151-71 for representation by the International Union of Security, Police and Fire Professionals of America.

"I think they are excited by the potential of having a voice at work and a voice on the job and a say in their work conditions," said Elizabeth Bunn, the union's secretary-treasurer. "It's really the same issues that are driving the elections for dealers."

A spokesman for Harrah's Entertainment declined to comment.

Shareholders this spring approved a \$17.1 billion buyout of the company by Apollo Management and Texas Pacific Group. Dealers at Caesars and Bally's, though not allowed to speak with the media, previously expressed concerns about the stability of their jobs once the private equity firms take over next year.

The president of the company's Eastern Division, Carlos Tolosa, acknowledged that fear in a May meeting with dealers before the Bally's election. He told them, however, that nothing would change, and the two private equity companies were "very, very good."

"I think there's a lot of change in the industry — not just at Harrah's," Bunn said. She noted the increasing takeover activity in many industries across the country.

"Unions provide protection and at least an ability to influence issues surrounding pay and job security and other issues," Bunn said.

The union began an organizing drive among Atlantic City casino dealers this year. It has won an election at Trump Plaza Hotel and Casino and lost elections at Atlantic City Hilton Casino Resort and Trump Marina Hotel Casino. The UAW recently filed a petition to represent dealers at Tropicana Casino and Resort, which in January was taken over by Columbia Sussex Corp. and has since lost 15 percent of its workforce through layoffs.

To e-mail Maya Rao at The Press:

MRao@pressofac.com