



Union Leader Accused of Firing Employee for Organizing Union Staff

Unfair Labor Practice Complaint with National Labor Relations Board Charges Amalgamated Transit Union (ATU) International President and AFL-CIO Executive Council Member Larry Hanley with Discriminatory Discharge of Union Employee for Organizing In-House Union for ATU Professional Staff, and Other Protected Activities, in Violation of the National Labor Relations Act

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David Highnote, the former Assistant Director of Communications of the [Amalgamated Transit Union](#) (ATU), filed an unfair labor practice (ULP) charge with the National Labor Relations Board (NLRB) on April 12, 2011, alleging that the ATU first threatened and then fired him for organizing the professional staff at the [AFL-CIO](#) affiliated union. His charge also requested expedited review as a “discharge organizing campaign” matter. [NLRB Case 5-CA-36561](#)

The ATU and newly-elected International President Larry Hanley are currently under investigation by the U.S. Department of Labor (DOL) for allegations of illegal and corrupt election practices during the bitterly contested election that brought Hanley into the Union’s leadership. Among the list of serious allegations were that Hanley and his supporters threatened and intimidated supporters of the candidates who opposed him and his slate of candidates. (DOL OLMS Case 540-08636-03)



ATU International President Larry Hanley

“ Only two weeks after Highnote signed his [Newspaper Guild] union card and started organizing the professional staff at the transit union, a senior advisor to ATU President Larry Hanley allegedly threatened, 'one strike and you're out.' ”

Highnote said that he experienced similar intimidation. Only two weeks after Highnote signed his union card and started an organizing campaign, a senior advisor to Hanley allegedly threatened, “I only want to say this once. Larry (Hanley) is sensitive to all of the things going on in and outside of the office. If we find out that you are discussing workplace conditions with co-workers or anyone else, then one strike and you’re out.” Other senior Hanley advisors are also alleged to have harassed and attempted to deter him from organizing, but he continued to work to form an in-house union to represent the professional staff as a bargaining unit of the Washington-Baltimore Newspaper Guild.

The ULP charge also alleges that the ATU’s reason for terminating him was pretextual. No “restructuring” took place, and two business days after his termination, the ATU hired someone into Highnote’s position.

Highnote stated, "People were scared of losing their jobs when Larry Hanley came in. Now that he has pushed out a number of staffers, they’re terrified.”