June 30, 2008

City of Hamilton
Attention: His Worship Mayor Fred Eisenberger and all Councilors
77 James Street North, Suite 230
Hamilton, Ontario
L8R 2K3

RE: LABOUR DISPUTE AT HORIZON

Dear Mayor Eisenberger and Councilors,

It has now been two weeks since the 270 workers at Horizon (represented by Local Union 636 of the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers) were forced to withdraw their services. By now you may be aware that the central issue in this dispute is respect in the workplace. While the actions taken by these workers is drastic, this work stoppage is the manifestation of widespread discontent that has been simmering for the past three years.

Horizon represents a corporate quilt that has been assembled through a series of mergers and acquisitions. With each piece added this electric blanket grew bigger and coverage expanded. Not surprisingly, Horizon has experienced more than its' share of growing pains in becoming Ontario’s third largest electrical distributor. If this utility hopes to realize its' goal of continued growth and expansion, administration must recognize the value and worth of their most important asset - the employees. Until then they will be unconvincing in their attempts to establish this organization as an employer of choice or a preferred business partner.

As the sole shareholder of Horizon we believe that actions, attitude and behaviour that perpetuate a negative image and reputation should give you cause for alarm. Inequity, servitude, favouritism, bullying and intimidation certainly do little to promote the good name of Horizon. These are but a few of the systemic injustices that must be addressed in order to restore a sense of mutual trust between the union and management. This employer must be held accountable for their actions and that is why we think the time has come for you to step up and take an active role in the efforts to resolve this dispute. To date, the appeals for fairness from the Union have been dismissed.

We approach you with great reluctance since we believe that the best solutions to any labour dispute are the ones worked out between the parties themselves. Regrettably, although the Union has made every reasonable effort to clarify our concerns and explore alternatives to resolve the issues outstanding, the employer remains entrenched in their position and unwilling to negotiate in good faith.

We would welcome the opportunity to discuss this matter further and invite you to contact our office with any questions.
Trusting that this meets with your understanding, I remain, 

Yours truly, 

[Signature]

Domenic Murdaca, Business Representative
Local Union 636, I.B.E.W.

Copy: J.R. (Rick) Wacheski, Business Manager/Financial Secretary
Ian Morris, Unit Chairperson - Horizon