



PRESSRELEASE

GE Cited for Labor Rights Violations

GROVE CITY, PA -- General Electric is interfering with the free speech and labor rights of more than a thousand workers at its diesel engine factories here, according to a complaint issued this week by the National Labor Relations Board (NLRB), the federal agency charged with protecting workers' rights on the job.

The NLRB complaint, which cites multiple labor law violations by GE, is scheduled for a hearing in Pittsburgh on March 25. The violations alleged include prohibiting the posting and distribution of information about labor unions and interfering with workers' plans to conduct a secret-ballot vote on GE's overtime policies.

"We're happy to see the Labor Board standing up for our rights," said Steve Gallagher, president of UE Local 601, Grove City United Employees. "The right to free speech and the right to organize are basic American rights that GE should respect."

GE employees in Grove City don't have a union contract, but they do have a union. Their "members only" union, which advocates for workers on issues including wages, insurance and working conditions, has dozens of dues-paying members in both of GE's Grove City plants, according to Gallagher. He said the union went to the NLRB for help when GE infringed on the right of the employees to speak up on behalf of their coworkers.

According to the complaint issued by the NLRB, the company "removed off-duty employees from its employee cafeterias while they were engaged in lawful union and other protected activities." Gallagher said the "off-duty employees" were union leaders trying to conduct a vote on overtime policies. Union leaders were also threatened with discipline, according to the complaint.

GE employs more than 1,200 workers at its Grove City plants, which produce new and remanufactured diesel engines. In a move that has drawn sharp objections from the union, the company recently began hiring new employees at rates far below those paid to existing employees.

The Grove City union is an affiliate of the United Electrical Workers (UE), a national union that holds a national contract with GE. The local union works through the national organization to impact GE's overall labor policies, Gallagher said.

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