



Stuart Appelbaum, *President*  
Jack C. Wurm, Jr., *Secretary-Treasurer*

**Retail, Wholesale and Department Store Union**

**October 3, 2011**

## **RWDSU Statement of Support and Solidarity for Occupy Wall Street**

Today Stuart Appelbaum, President of the Retail, Wholesale and Department Store Union (RWDSU), which represents 100,000 workers in the United States and Canada, released the following statement of support and solidarity for the Occupy Wall Street resistance effort on behalf of the union.

“Occupy Wall Street has brought into sharp focus a reality that cannot be denied: corporate greed is responsible for harming the lives of millions of working people and unemployed people.

“A small group of firms, banks, and corporations now hold trillions worth of our collective wealth and assets. That money should be invested in job creation on a massive scale and used to rebuild countless lives damaged by the recklessness that caused the recession. But Wall Street won’t do it. Instead, the financial elite want to dictate the future of our entire economy and democracy in ways that will protect the wealthiest 1% at the expense of everyone else.

Over the past few weeks, though, courageous men and women have been occupying Wall Street—not just the place but the starring role Wall Street likes to play in our public discourse, a point that much of the mainstream news coverage and editorializing has not fully appreciated.

After hearing the top 1% lie for so long, they are speaking the truth known by the unheard 99%. That’s why their message resonates so widely. They offer a clear perspective that rarely generates this kind of attention but that millions of regular people, not just activists and unionists, share: Wall Street should not control our economy, our democracy, or our lives. When Wall Street wields so much power and influence, we are fundamentally worse off.

Every hour that Occupy Wall Street continues, it can help revitalize a progressive movement nationally and globally that aims to achieve new victories for all working people and the unemployed. It’s up to us whether we harness their energy and commitment at the bargaining table, in the halls of government, and among the coalitions and alliances we try to sustain.

Too many of the occupiers have been arrested unnecessarily and unfairly. I urge Mayor Michael Bloomberg and Police Commissioner Ray Kelly to instruct the police force to show restraint, civility, and respect when dealing with the increasing number of peaceful people occupying Wall Street.

In the days ahead, the RWDSU will do everything it can to learn from and assist Occupy Wall Street as we fight to raise standards in the industries where we organize and represent workers; as we fight to pass living wage legislation that will create more good jobs; as we fight for the fairness and justice that all working people and the unemployed deserve.”

#### **About the Retail, Wholesale and Department Store Union (RWDSU)**

The Retail, Wholesale and Department Store Union (RWDSU) represents 100,000 workers in the United States and Canada in retail, food processing, and other fast-growing industries. The RWDSU is affiliated with the 1.3 million member United Food and Commercial Workers (UFCW) union. For more information about the RWDSU, please visit our website and connect with us on Facebook, Twitter, and Tumblr.

###