

144 WORKERS FACE LAY OFF AT HOLIDAY INN SELECT IN NAPERVILLE CITY



Around 144 workers are now facing an impending lay off as the Holiday Inn Select in Naperville City, Illinois announced plans to sell its property. Several bidders and buyers expressed their intention of purchasing the hotel but Jenko Group is likely to be the winning bidder for the property. The Naperville City Council offered an incremental tax rebate incentive to attract buyers, in which the hotel's new owners would only pay taxes at 2009 levels. Hotel tax revenues generated above that level would be rebated for up to 20 years or \$10 million.

The affected employees requested that the Naperville City Council to support them in their bid to keep their jobs since Jenko Group intends to close the hotel down and reopen after a year under a new flag- Marriot. Members of Unite Here Local 450, a union representing workers in hospitality, food service and textile manufacturing, are asking for the council's help in adding a job-saving clause aside from the tax incentive. "We would like to see if the council would tag on the addition to save the jobs of 144 people by not laying them off and continuing the operation of the hotel. I believe the hotel can do the renovations, which they've done many times in the past without closing the hotel down, saving 144 jobs."

City Manager Doug Krieger said that the council is in no position to meddle in private businesses. As much as the council can, they try not to. "It's been a strategic initiative of the city for a decade to attract a higher-end hotel to the city. Our position has always been that we not stand in the way of progress and we feel that this is progress." Krieger added that council believed that the hotel renovations would increase jobs especially in the construction industry. And once the re-flagged hotel opens, there would be more hospitality employment opportunities to follow.

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