



NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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OCSEA to CIIC: “Aramark never had control of this contract”

Columbus – Today the President of the Ohio Civil Service Employees Association, Christopher Mabe, testified at a Statehouse hearing that prison food service contractor “Aramark” is creating an unsafe environment in Ohio’s prison system and is causing DR&C to supplement the contract with additional resources.

Reports of maggots in prison food, on kitchen equipment and in serving lines have hit the news and airwaves over the last few weeks. But OCSEA, the union representing the majority of Department Rehabilitation and Correction employees, says that maggots are just the tip of the iceberg in terms of contract infractions being committed by Aramark.

“Now, with nearly 100 Aramark employees banned from ever entering a DR&C prison; more than 100 instances of food shortages and many, many other issues ranging from increased contraband, to low staffing levels, to inappropriate relationships—it is clear Aramark never really had control of this contract,” Mabe testified before the Correctional Institution Inspection Committee.

Food shortages, food substitutions, poor food quality, sanitation issues, increased contraband, low staffing levels and inappropriate relationships all present challenges for prison security, said the union, especially since DR&C must provide increased security or monitoring when incidents occur and to prevent further disturbances. More than 100 food shortages have been documented by DR&C, and many of those have led to security problems, inmate violence and programming delays.

Not only are these contract violations causing unsafe prisons, said Mabe, but costs are being shifted over to food service by additional monitoring, staff reallocation, additional inspections and increased security. This has the effect of propping up the contractor, said Mabe. “So instead of Aramark servicing our institutions, perhaps it’s more accurate to say that DR&C is now servicing Aramark,” said Mabe.

According to DR&C’s own documentation, Aramark’s problems aren’t getting better, either. Just today, another incident was reported of maggots in a serving line at Noble Correctional Institution. “What has become clear is that this contract comes at either too high a risk or too high a price tag—or both.”

OCSEA is asking DR&C to consider ending the contract and bringing prison food service back under state control.

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OCSEA represents 30,000 state employees, including 8,000 members in DR&C. OCSEA President Christopher Mabe has worked for DR&C for more than 20 years. For more information contact Sally Meckling, 614-865-2602 or 614-404-3881 (cell).