



NEWS RELEASE

For immediate release
January 31, 2017

Union beats Aramark price on food service bid again

Westerville – Today the union representing Ohio prison employees presented its lowest offer yet to take back Ohio’s prison food service from private vendor Aramark. The proposal calls for a \$1.226 meal cost and will save \$4.4 million a year over Aramark’s current price. The Aramark contract for Ohio’s 26 prisons expires this year on June 30.

Aramark currently charges \$1.313 per meal, and is expected to increase if the contract is renewed.

“We’ve always maintained that public sector employees can compete against private contractors,” said OCSEA President Christopher Mabe. “It’s our hope that the Department of Rehabilitation and Correction and Ohio legislators will see that value and end its contract with Aramark.”

Numerous security and sanitation violations including maggots in food, inappropriate relationships, increased contraband and staff and food shortages have shown the inadequacy of Aramark’s staff training. The union proposal includes increased security and sanitation training for 343 Correctional Food Service Coordinators, and brings back 39 Food Service Managers whose primary responsibility is sanitation.

OCSEA’s proposal would require food service workers to receive the same security and custody training as Correctional Officers, as they did before Aramark took over. Additionally, instead of only managers receiving ServSafe certification, as is Aramark’s practice, the union’s proposal will certify all food service workers.

OCSEA’s contract will address the issue of reduced security staff since Lieutenants and Captains who were re-located to prison kitchens to monitor food service will go back to providing needed security in other areas of the prisons.

“With well-trained, knowledgeable staff we believe many of the security and sanitation problems we’ve experienced in prison food service will be eliminated,” said Mabe.

This is the third time proposal the union has brought forward to bring food service under state operation.

OCSEA represents approximately 30,000 state employees who work in a wide range of security, regulatory, administrative, direct care, maintenance, customer service and other positions, including 8,500 who work in the Ohio Department of Correction and Rehabilitation. For more information, contact Sally Meckling, 614-865-2602 or 614-404-3881 (cell). ##