

## 10-29-2009 Message of Solidarity with the Pinoy Teachers of Louisiana

### Solidarity Statement

October 29, 2009 Message of Solidarity with the Pinoy Teachers of Louisiana

The Partido ng Manggagawa salutes the brave Filipino migrant teachers in Louisiana. In the name of the working class in the Philippines, we support you in your fight for justice against the illegal and oppressive policies of the recruiter Lulu Navarro. We pledge to help your cause and struggle in any way we can.

You have broken the stereotype of Filipino teachers as meek and submissive slaves who will endure inhuman treatment with hardly a peep. Instead you have stood for what you believe is right despite all the odds and against threats of persecution by Navarro and her minions.

You have proven once again that in unity there is strength and in action lies the possibility of victory. The support you have garnered from the Filipino-American community, the American Federation of Teachers and even the coverage that has been given your issue by the US mass media is testimony to your determination in struggle over the course of almost a year.

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With the light at the end of the tunnel ever clearer now as far as achieving your goals of seeking justice, we encourage you to broaden the scope of your fight and raise it to the next level. We ask that add to your agenda the reform of overseas employment policy in order to stop the abuse of Filipino migrant workers. If professionals like teachers can become slave labor in a country like the US, no wonder OFW's by the thousands suffer from abuse, discrimination and indignity across the globe.

Among the most important of these reforms would be to end the deregulation of the labor export industry and for Congress to amend the Migrant Workers Act in this regard. Illegal recruitment and OFW abuse thrives since government insists on promoting overseas employment while allowing private recruitment agencies to do the actual placement of workers.

It is also necessary that Philippine embassies and consulates make the protection of migrant workers its principal work. The government must forge labor agreements with receiving countries that will guarantee enforcement of labor standards, social protections and workers rights.

You are in the best position to advocate such reforms. In order for such a bigger fight to succeed, you must forge links with other Filipino migrant workers, expand further your alliances with the American labor movement and the Filipino-American community, even as you build ties with the working class movement in the Philippines. ###