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Representative Thomas supports Ahmeenah Young

August 18, 2010

I am writing to express my full support for Ahmeenah Young, President and Chief Executive Officer of the Pennsylvania Convention Center in response to the unwarranted and unjustified attacks which have been levied on her by Mr. John Dougherty, the Business Manager of IBEW Local 98.

I am appalled that Mr. Dougherty has attempted to categorize Ms. Young as inexperienced and ineffective in her current position. Ms. Young's has over 20 years of leadership experience in the hospitality industry. The majority of these years were spent progressing through management within the PCC itself. It is precisely Ms. Young's intimate knowledge of the Pennsylvania Convention Center which has allowed her to oversee the \$790 million expansion project which is currently well underway.

Mr. Dougherty has also advanced the disingenuous claim that Ms. Young has an anti-union agenda. I, for one, see absolutely no basis to this claim when you consider that the current expansion has meant steady employment for some 1800 dues paying union members during the worst recession to hit this city in decades. I invite Mr. Dougherty to clarify exactly how Ms. Young is going about her alleged union-busting while preserving critical jobs for IBEW Local 98 and over a dozen other Philadelphia unions.

Ahmeenah Young is the right person to lead the Pennsylvania Convention Center at this critical moment. I am proud of Ms. Young's accomplishments and the fact that she is one of only two African-American women currently serving as CEO of a major convention center in the United States. Her reputation and experience speak for themselves, and I have complete confidence in her abilities.

Sincerely,

W. Curtis Thomas
State Representative
181st Legislative District