



# Rochester Building & Construction Trades Council

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Hon. William Knight  
P.O. Box 3136  
Greensboro, NC 27402

Hon. William Knight,

I am writing to make you aware of a dangerous and disturbing problem we are contending with in our Upstate New York community that I understand you may soon be facing in Greensboro.

Edwards Development of Columbus, Ohio has purchased a large tract of land adjacent to one of our major local universities, the Rochester Institute of Technology, with the intention of building a large scale student housing project. Let me be clear, the Rochester Building and Construction Trades Council is abashedly pro-development and we are in need of student housing locally. Unfortunately, this particular development project has become a textbook example of how out-of-town developers trying to do a job on the cheap can wreak havoc on a community.

From our perspective, the main problem stems from Edwards Development's reluctance to use local labor, preferring instead to bring in temporary workers of questionable skills from other places. Aside from the negative impact this causes for our local economy, these workers are dangerously unfamiliar with local zoning and safety requirements. The New York State Department of Labor's investigation is ongoing, but they have already issued tens of thousands of dollars in fines for unsafe working conditions. So bad is this project, one Department of Labor official called it "the worst project in New York State." While you may not be familiar with the breadth of projects that occur throughout New York, let me assure you this dubious distinction is not easily earned.

Sadly, the end result for Rochester will be threefold. First, a major project in our community provided few local jobs and little positive economic impact. Second, it is very likely that hundreds of students and parents will be left scrambling for housing at the beginning of this school year while Edwards tries to bring the project up to code. And third, with so many liberties taken with safety and labor, we can only speculate what corners were cut on the design and materials. I can only imagine what kind of condition this development will be in ten years from now.

You may not encounter the problems we are having here in New York, but I would strongly encourage you to consider this a cautionary tale. This type of development scheme, preformed by this specific developer, has brought us nothing but trouble.

Sincerely,

John Perticone  
President

Asbestos Workers Local 12A  
Boilermakers Lodge 7  
Bricklayers Local 3  
Carpenters Local 85  
Electrical Workers Local 86

Elevator Constructors Local 27  
Glaziers & Glassworkers Local 677  
Insulators & Allied Workers Local 26  
Iron Workers Local 33

Laborers Local 435  
Millwrights & Pile Drivers Local 1163  
Operating Engineers Local 832  
Painters Local 150

Plumbers & Steamfitters Local 13  
Road Sprinkler Fitters Local 669  
Roofers Local 22  
Sheet Metal Workers Local 46  
Teamsters Local 118