



Commissioner Brad Avakian
Bureau of Labor and Industries

Press Release

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BOLI going to court over Stanich's employee complaints

Portland employer denies wrongdoing in wage and hour, civil rights inquiries

PORTLAND—Oregon's Wage and Hour Division, part of the state Bureau of Labor and Industries (BOLI), has determined that Stanich's, LLC, the operator of popular Portland restaurant Stanich's, owes unpaid wages, penalty wages and civil penalties for multiple violations of wage and hour law, totaling almost \$22,000. Stanich's has contested the determination and is demanding that BOLI bring the matter to a court hearing. Two former employees who are owed wages have also filed civil rights complaints alleging they were fired for opposing Stanich's illegal pay practices.

"The request for a court trial is the latest effort at stonewalling from a company that takes no responsibility for its poor employment practices," said Labor Commissioner Brad Avakian, head of BOLI. "The Wage and Hour Division has built a strong case through diligent investigation, and has given Stanich's every opportunity to provide some evidence that they are complying with the law. This employer clearly wishes to pretend that violating state laws will have no consequences."

BOLI's investigator was repeatedly rebuffed by Stanich's in attempts to inspect the payroll documentation that the employer claims will show their compliance. When the investigator was able to meet with Stanich's attorney, no documents were available and it came to the investigator's attention that the required employment law postings were not displayed at the restaurant. Stanich's continues to deny any wrongdoing, despite statements from witnesses, including a former manager and a former bookkeeper, confirming that employees routinely went unpaid for hours worked.

"BOLI has accumulated substantial evidence of this employer violating wage and hour laws," Avakian continued. "We will continue to push for the thousands of dollars owed to these wage claimants, while thoroughly investigating the allegations of retaliation filed with the Civil Rights Division."

Oregon's Civil Rights Division, also a part of BOLI, investigates complaints or unlawful discrimination in employment, housing and public accommodations. Filing a wage claim and reporting information that indicates violation of a law are protected activities and the allegations against Stanich's are currently under investigation.

Each year, BOLI processes approximately 50,000 inquiries to the Civil Rights and Wage and Hour Divisions, as well as some 5,000 civil rights complaints and wage claims. For more information about BOLI, visit <http://www.oregon.gov/>.

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The mission of the Bureau of Labor and Industries is to protect employment rights, advance employment opportunities, and protect access to housing and public accommodations free from discrimination.