



News Release

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

SHARONVILLE GROUP TARGETS FORD WORKERS AND FAMILIES IN THEIR OWN COMMUNITY

Boycott is anti-business, anti-worker, and anti-family

CINCINNATI, March 17, 2006 – While saying that they want to help preserve jobs and contribute to economic growth in the Cincinnati region, a Sharonville-based ultraconservative anti-gay group is supporting a national boycott of Ford Motor Company at a time when one Ford plant in the Cincinnati region is slated for closure, and another in their own hometown of Sharonville is under pressure.

Ford has been targeted for a boycott by CCV, a local organization with headquarters in Sharonville, because the company advertises its cars and trucks in publications that reach gay consumers. “This group only has one thing in mind: promoting its agenda no matter what the cost to anyone else. They do not care who suffers – even in their own home town,” said Gary Wright, President of Equality Cincinnati.

Wright went on to say in a statement today: “CCV is threatening jobs in its own back yard by taking its anti-gay agenda to a ridiculous extreme. Gays and lesbians contribute to our economy and that’s a good thing for American companies, their workers, and their families. It’s malicious, destructive and short sighted to boycott a company for recognizing the buying power of gays and speaking to potential customers in the gay community. That stance hurts corporations and in the case of Ford, it threatens the livelihood of the 1900 workers and their families in the Sharonville plant who are trying to hang on to their jobs. CCV’s support of the boycott is anti-gay, anti-business, anti-worker, and anti-family.”

The Cincinnati region is struggling to attract and keep jobs and people. Census estimates released yesterday show that Hamilton County suffered a net loss of almost 7,000 people in the 12 months ending July 1, 2005. The city of Sharonville itself has lost 500 residents since 2000 according to the latest available data.

Population estimates for 2004, the latest available for Ohio cities, place Sharonville's population at 13,299. "If they want to help the region, CCV should help Ford keep jobs in the community, not try to put people out of work. Sharonville is losing population. Older cities like Sharonville do not need to be losing good jobs, too," Wright said.

Ford has already announced that it is closing a plant in nearby Batavia, Ohio in 2008. That will cost the region 1,745 jobs. Workers in the Sharonville plant could also be affected as more senior union members from Batavia displace newer workers at Sharonville. 1900 people work at the Sharonville plant. Plant workers are represented by United Auto Workers Local 863,

"The big problem in our region is attracting and keeping good paying jobs," Wright said. "All of us, gay and straight, need to be working together to help make this an attractive place for companies to do business. This group is so dead set on demonizing the gay community that they have completely forgotten what it means to be a good neighbor. They just don't care if what they are doing costs people their jobs."

"We need to work together to attract jobs and build a stronger economy for everyone here. Gays and lesbians are just like everyone else. They buy cars and trucks, too, and smart companies need to develop marketing that appeals to them. Mean-spirited attacks on Ford workers and their families do not help anyone."

Boycotts like this have typically failed in the past. "There is very little broad public support for these divisive tactics. Still, this is not the way neighbors should treat neighbors. It's not how we treat people in Cincinnati."

Equality Cincinnati is a non-profit organization working for full equality for gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgender people in the greater Cincinnati region.

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