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As religious leaders throughout the Chicago area, many of whom preside at multiple funerals each week, we believe the trust given to us by the deceased and their loved ones is sacred. The journey that grieving families must take when a loved one dies places them in the most vulnerable human condition. During such a tender time, we believe that all persons interacting with families must do so with the utmost professional and compassionate attitude. To do otherwise violates a sacred bond and complicates the grieving process for families for years to come.

It has come to our attention that fifty-nine funeral directors and drivers are in negotiations with Service Corporation International, a national chain based in Texas, valued at almost \$4 billion and with its stock rising over 50% in the last year. In spite of this enormous wealth, SCI is insisting on eliminating pension plans and meaningful wage increases, while simultaneously raising health care expenditures for employees. Such grievous actions could necessitate disruptions to funeral and burial services in Chicago and cause our community great harm.

We call upon SCI to negotiate a fair contract with its employees, the fifty-nine front-line funeral directors and drivers at its sixteen locations, upon whom families rely for guidance, comfort, and reassurance. We call upon SCI to provide dignified wages, health care benefits, and pensions, as well as a dignified negotiating process. We call upon SCI to treat their employees with the same level of integrity that SCI expects their employees to demonstrate to grieving families. May God continue to bless all of us, as we care for families during such a sacred time in their lives.

Rabbi Alison Abrams, Jewish Council on Urban Affairs, Chicago
Rev. Bonnie Beckonchrist, First United Methodist Church, Arlington Heights
Rev. B.J. Birkhahn-Rommelfanger, Incarnation United Methodist, Arlington Heights
Rev. Erik Christianson, St. Luke's Lutheran Church, Chicago
Sr. Carol Cook, Sisters of Charity Blessed Virgin Mary, Chicago
Fr. Brendan Curran, St Pius Catholic Church, Chicago
Fr. Chuck Dahm, St Pius Catholic Church, Chicago
Rev. Roger Dart, United Church of Christ, Lake Forest
Cantor Michael Davis, Lakeside Congregation, Evanston
Sr. Kathleen Desautels, Sisters of Providence, Chicago

Fr. Larry Dowling, St. Agatha's Church, Chicago
Rabbi Ellen Dreyfuss, B'nai Yehuda Beth Sholom, Homewood
Rabbi Lawrence Edwards, Congregation Or Chadash, Chicago
Rabbi Bruce Elder, Congregation Hakafa, Winnetka
Rev. Larry Greenfield, American Baptist Churches of Metro Chicago
Rev. Rob Hamilton, First United Methodist Church, Geneva
Rev. C.J. Hawking, Euclid Avenue United Methodist Church, Oak Park
Rev. Fred Kinsey, Unity Lutheran Church, Chicago
Rabbi Peter Knobel, Beth Emet Free Synagogue, Evanston
Rev. Sherri Lowly, Berry United Methodist Church, Chicago
Rev. Michael Mann, Northern Illinois Conference of United Methodist Church, Elgin
Rev. Claire Marich, First United Methodist Church, Downers Grove
Rev. Kevin J. McLemore, Epiphany UCC, Chicago, IL
Rev. Craig Mueller, Holy Trinity Lutheran Church, Chicago
Rev. Liz Munoz, St. James Episcopal Cathedral, Chicago
Rev. Lois Parr, Broadway United Methodist Church, Chicago
Rev. Jeffrey Phillips, St. John United Church of Christ, Arlington Heights
Rev. Rod Reinhart, St. Joseph Aaden's Episcopal Church, Blue Island
Rev. Erma Lou Roller, First United Methodist Church, Downers Grove
Rev. Brian Roots, First United Methodist Church, Deerfield
Rabbi Brant Rosen, Jewish Reform Congregation, Evanston
Sr. Marlene Schemmel, Sisters of St. Joseph, LaGrange Park
Rev. Marti Scott, Euclid Avenue United Methodist Church, Oak Park
Fr. Mike Shanahan, Our Lady of Lourdes Catholic Church, Chicago
Rev. Stephen Swanson, St Paul's Lutheran Church, Villa Park
Rev. Alan Taylor, Unity Temple, Oak Park
Rev. John Thomas, Chicago Theological Seminary, Chicago
Rev. Eugene Winkler, United Methodist Church, Naperville
Rev. Wendy Witt, First United Methodist Church at the Chicago Temple, Chicago
Rev. Sara Wollheb, United Church of Christ, Chicago