

Study Reveals Subsidies for Nissan Top \$1.3 Billion

Nissan offered \$290,000 per job over life of the subsidies, three times previously reported number

(JACKSON, MISS.) – May 17, 2013--Members of MAFFAN (Mississippi Alliance for Fairness at Nissan), a community organization representing clergy, elected officials and civil rights activists, Nissan workers, a representative from the Good Jobs First organization, the Mississippi Student Justice Alliance (MSJA) and other supporters of Nissan workers' right to organize announced at a news conference at the state Capitol in Jackson, Miss., the results of an extensive report from Good Jobs First on subsidies provided by Mississippi taxpayers to Nissan, which are 3 ½ times the amount previously reported and may ultimately total \$1.33 billion.

Participants said while they are glad Nissan has located in Mississippi, the company is not living up to the expectations created when it accepted taxpayer subsidies, particularly by denying workers the right to decide freely whether to have a union and hiring large numbers of temporary workers who make less than permanent workers at the Nissan plant.

Good Jobs First is a nonprofit organization that studies corporate accountability and economic development subsidies. Their report "A Good Deal for Mississippi?" reveals that subsidies made available to Nissan may amount to approximately \$290,000 PER JOB in Mississippi over the life of the subsidy programs. The financial assistance Nissan has been offered includes foregone tax revenue and spending on infrastructure and training to help get the plant up and running.

MAFFAN's C.J. Rhodes said Nissan's recent announcement of a raise for Canton workers, along with high profile community investments, are cynical moves to deflect attention away from the fact that Nissan intimidates and threatens workers who want to exercise their fundamental right to free association and have a voice on the job through unionization. MAFFAN was founded after Congressman Bennie Thompson called on Mississippi leaders to form a committee to stand up for Nissan workers.

"Where have you been for the past 10 years, Nissan?" asked Rhodes at the press conference. "Canton workers and the Canton community cannot be bought," he said. "We are not going away. We will keep standing with workers for as long as it takes to get Nissan to respect their basic human right to have a voice on the job."

Nissan worker Rosalind Essex said it's time for Nissan to live up to what Canton workers and Mississippi expected when they offered Nissan over a billion dollars in subsidies: permanent jobs and a voice on the job. "We see through Nissan's attempts to manipulate the community with a come-lately effort to be a responsible corporate citizen here," said Essex. "Those funds they're giving are really just a return of taxpayer dollars, so this is no effort for Nissan at all. We want to see the effort also put into stopping threats and intimidation against workers who want a voice on the job, which is their fundamental right," she said.

College students, who have created Student Justice Alliances (SJA's) in various states including Mississippi, Florida and Georgia, are a growing force of support in the campaign by Nissan workers to gain a voice on the job and stop the company from intimidating and threatening those who support forming a union. One of SJA's goals is to continue expanding membership through the establishment of local SJA chapters at many of the nation's 115 historically black colleges and universities and at other college campuses. Mississippi Student Justice Alliance (MSJA)'s Tyson Jackson says today's students are tomorrow's Nissan workers. "We don't want to inherit a work world where our parents are disrespected and that tradition is carried on to us. We want permanent jobs that our taxpayer dollars are helping create. And we want Nissan to respect workers' right to have dignity and a voice on

the job without being threatened and intimidated by the company,” said the MSJA’s Jackson.

Because of the actions of Congressman Thompson, MAFFAN, students and workers, Nissan is giving workers a raise after numerous profitable years and is making high profile investments in the Canton community. Those actions are appreciated, but what’s expected of Nissan hasn’t changed. Nissan must respect workers and their community in the following ways:

- Treat workers with dignity and respect. Nissan continuously denies workers in the Canton plant a fair union election. Nissan has intimidated workers who are interested in having a union, even though it is their right to choose for themselves. Nissan refuses to allow workers to hear both sides of the issue before making a decision.
- Provide permanent jobs for all Nissan workers. Nissan’s workforce, as of 2008, was 22 percent temporary according to a State of Mississippi audit. Temporary workers receive less pay, limited benefits and have no job security. The expectation when Nissan was offered the subsidies was that Nissan would pay workers an average annual wage of \$45,309. Temporary workers in Canton make nowhere near this wage.
- Create the number of jobs expected when the community provided the subsidies. According to a report commissioned by Mississippi Development Authority, the Nissan plant was expected to employ 5300 plant workers and to create an additional 22,000 supplier and related jobs. The Bureau of Labor Statistics reported just 4,400 supplier jobs as of 2012, down 50 percent from 2000, before the Canton Nissan plant opened.

Workers and their supporters are calling on Nissan to:

- Honor the UAW Fair Election Principles (for details go to dobetternissan.org)
- Apologize for and retract statements made to workers implying that the plant will close or lose product if they vote to organize
- Agree to give UAW supporters equal time to show videos, and hold meetings with workers for the same amount of time the company has spent having anti-union meetings in the past year
- Agree not to hold meetings on company time unless union supporters have equal time to meet with workers

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