



LAX hotels ordered to pay 'living wage'

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LOS ANGELES -- The LAX Hilton lost its bid for an injunction to stop the city from enacting an ordinance requiring airport-area hotels to pay workers a "living wage," labor and hotel officials said today.

The ordinance requires that hotels near Los Angeles International Airport pay their workers at least \$9.39 an hour and provide them with health insurance, or pay them \$10.64 per hour without benefits.

The "living wage" ordinance was approved by the Los Angeles City Council in February 2007, but was quickly challenged in court by hotel owners and business leaders.

Earlier this month, the LAX Hilton filed a lawsuit alleging that those requirements violate the National Labor Relations Act and state and federal equal protection guarantees.

"The city of Los Angeles should not be allowed to single out 12 businesses on one street with unwarranted regulation, merely to further the political and financial gain of union interests. It is clear that this unfair and overreacting

law should not stand," said Grant Coonley, general manager of the LAX Hilton.

A federal judge's decision to deny the injunction request drew praise from the Los Angeles Alliance for a New Economy, which backed the ordinance.

"Even with revenues soaring, the LAX Hilton seems determined to deny their own workers decent wages and a better life. It is time for the LAX Hilton to stop fighting this law and pay their workers a living wage," said Vivian Rothstein, LAANE's deputy director.

In April, the state Supreme Court declined to hear the case, essentially upholding a ruling from the 2nd District Court of Appeal, which found that the Enhancement Zone ordinance was sufficiently different from a repealed "Living Wage" ordinance. That decision cleared the way for the measure to take effect.