

## **Hamra – Poor Treatment of Workers and Donations to Republicans**

### **Wage Theft Settlements**

**In 2019, Chicago Bread LLC., Owned by Hamra Enterprises, Was Sued By an Employee for Failing to Pay Her and Other Assistant Managers Overtime; The Case Resulted in a \$675,000 Settlement.** In October 2019, Melissa Rivett sued Chicago Bread, LLC., which is owned by Hamra Enterprises, for failing to pay assistant managers in Illinois overtime compensation. Rivett’s lawsuit alleged that assistant managers working for Hamra Enterprises were improperly classified as exempt from federal overtime compensation laws and were not accurately paid for hours worked in excess of 40 hours per week. Rivett’s complaint against Chicago Bread LLC stated in part, “[Assistant Managers (AM)], who are classified as exempt, are required to perform non-exempt work in order to sufficiently service customers due to Defendant’s tight labor budgets. The primary duty of the AM position is to perform non-exempt work including manual labor and customer service tasks. . . . Despite the non-managerial nature of their job duties, at all relevant times, Defendant improperly classified Plaintiff and similarly situated AMs as exempt from federal overtime compensation and, in the process, deprived them of overtime wages for hours worked in excess of 40 hours in a workweek. For much of her employment at Chicago Bread, Plaintiff worked approximately 45 hours per week but was not paid proper overtime wages of time and a half for the hours that she worked in excess of 40 hours per week.” Rivett claimed that some assistant managers worked 50 or 60 hours per week with no overtime compensation. The complaint also alleged that by failing to pay assistant managers overtime wages as required by law, Chicago Bread LLC had “willfully violated the Fair Labor Standards Act. . . . Defendant has intentionally, willfully, and repeatedly engaged in a pattern, practice, and/or policy of violating the FLSA with respect to Plaintiff and” similarly situated assistant managers. In 2019, Rivett’s attorneys filed an unopposed motion for approval of collective action settlement to the court. In November 2020, the court approved the motion for approval of collective action settlement and approved a \$675,000 settlement the parties had agreed upon following a private mediation session. That month the case was dismissed with prejudice. [Rivett v. Chicago Bread, LLC., U.S. District Court for the Northern District of Illinois, NO. 1:19-cv-06637, Filed 10/7/19]

**Hamra Enterprises Was Sued in Federal Court in Illinois in 2020 for Unlawful Retaliation in Violation of the Fair Labor Standards Act After Allegedly Failing to Pay Overtime Wages; The Case Was Settled in 2023.** In July 2020, a former employee, Timothy Dunn, sued Hamra Enterprises in federal court for “unlawful retaliation” in violation of the Fair Labor Standards Act after the company allegedly failed to pay him overtime wages. Dunn was an employee of Hamra Enterprises and Hamra Management Company LLC from 2001 until May 2020. As of 2020, Dunn was Regional Director of Facilities in the suburban Chicago area. In March 2020, Dunn and his six-person team were asked to work overtime to set up outdoor dining areas at Panera Bread restaurants in light of the COVID-19 pandemic. Dunn’s complaint read in part, “During the normal course of business, the task of preparing the stores for outdoor dining takes close to 3 weeks, but [Dunn’s direct supervisor Ben] Kaplan required Plaintiff and his team to do it over a weekend. Plaintiff explained to Kaplan that this amount of work in such a condensed time frame would require overtime and objected to having his team work for free. Kaplan resisted paying overtime wages and claimed workers would be given comp time instead

at a later date and insisted they must do the work to keep their jobs. Plaintiff and his team had no choice but to complete the work as instructed, with each of the hourly employees working overtime without pay. ... In mid-April, Plaintiff learned that Hamra had received a Paycheck Protection Program (PPP) loan from the U.S. Small Business Administration. The PPP program was designed to help small businesses pay their workers, so with this influx of money, Plaintiff again asked Hamra to pay the hourly technicians the overtime they were owed under the FLSA and Illinois Minimum Wage Law. Hamra refused. ... In a further effort to address this issue, Plaintiff put his concerns in a written complaint to Kaplan on May 7, 2020. Plaintiff also spoke with Sonja Breuer, Director of Human Resources, about his complaint on May 8, 2020. ... Three days following this written report about the unpaid wages, Plaintiff was fired. As further retaliation, Hamra also fired Plaintiff's son, who was one of the technicians required to work overtime without pay. Hamra claimed the terminations of Plaintiff and his son both resulted from a restructuring of the maintenance department and the elimination of Plaintiff's position, but this explanation is pretext. Shortly after Plaintiff and his son were fired, Plaintiff learned that Hamra was seeking to replace his son with a new technician." In March 2023, both parties agreed to a settlement and submitted a joint stipulation of dismissal with prejudice. The details of the settlement were not disclosed in court filings. [Dunn v. Hamra Enterprises et al, U.S. District Court for the Northern District of Illinois Eastern Division, NO. 1:20-cv-04329, Dismissed 3/8/23]

**Contributions to Republicans**

**Hamra Donated \$3,500 to Former Republican Governor of Missouri Matt Blunt.** Missouri campaign finance records show that in 2005 and 2006, Hamra donated \$3,675 to former Republican Missouri Governor Matt Blunt.

| <b>Recipient</b>                | <b>Amount</b>  | <b>Date</b>       |
|---------------------------------|----------------|-------------------|
| Missourians for Matt Blunt Inc. | \$1,200        | 1/10/05           |
| Missourians for Matt Blunt Inc. | \$2,475        | Aggregate in 2006 |
| <b>TOTAL</b>                    | <b>\$3,675</b> |                   |

[[Missouri Ethics Commission](#), accessed 1/26/24]

- In 2005, Blunt Toured Missouri Celebrating His Signing of an Anti-Abortion Bill into Law.** In September 2005, St. Louis Public Radio reported, “Missouri Governor Matt Blunt is defending a seven-city tour of the state to symbolically sign an anti-abortion law he already signed a week ago. The law gives parents the right to sue anyone who helps their minor daughter get an abortion. It also requires doctors performing abortions to have privileges at hospitals within 30 miles of their practice. The governor says the law’s impact justifies his tour and he believes a federal judge’s block of the measure will not stand: I believe it’s important to do things that reduce the number of abortions that occur in Missouri, and I think it’s important enough to get around the state and talk about, Blunt said.” [[St. Louis Public Radio](#), 9/22/05]

- **In 2004, Blunt Said He Was Opposed to Abortions Except in Cases of Sexual Assault, Incest and Saving the Life of the Mother.** During Blunt’s 2004 gubernatorial race, the St. Louis Post Dispatch reported, “Blunt is opposed to legalized abortion, though his spokesman, John Hancock, said Blunt favors exceptions for rape, incest and the life of the woman. ... Blunt has criticized [his Democratic opponent] for not opposing so-called partial-birth abortions.” [[St. Louis Post Dispatch](#), 10/28/04]
- **When He Became Governor, Blunt “Disallowed Collective Bargaining on Behalf of State Employees.”** The Columbia Missourian reported in July 2008, “At his first press conference as Missouri’s governor, Matt Blunt shot down measures supporting collective bargaining by state workers and signed several cost-cutting measures. ... By revoking an order made by his predecessor, former Gov. Bob Holden, Blunt disallowed collective bargaining on behalf of state employees and ended the practice of charging all new state workers a negotiating fee, even if they do not wish to join the union. ‘The decision to join or not join a service union or any other organization should be left up to the individual,’ Blunt said. ‘No organization has the right to compel anybody to join it.’” [[Columbia Missourian](#), 6/4/08]
- **In 2005, Blunt Signed an Executive Order Which Was Criticized By Labor Unions as Leading to “Rubberstamping the Decisions of Businesses.”** The Nevada Daily Mail reported in July 2005, “Gov. Matt Blunt quietly signed an executive order earlier this month that eliminated the state panel that presided over union elections for public sector workers and determined the status of collective bargaining units. The order, which Blunt signed July 1 without public announcement, shifted the powers and duties of the Missouri State Board of Mediation to the state Labor and Industrial Relations Commission. The commission takes on the board’s duties while retaining its previous responsibilities for reviewing disputes involving workers’ compensation and unemployment benefits. ... The mediation board consisted of five members- two each representing workers and employers and a neutral chairman. ... The labor commission consists of three members- one each representing the employers, workers and the public. The similarity of the configurations of the two panels made the commission the logical choice to assume the board’s duties, [a Blunt spokesperson] said. Ken Jacob, state president of the American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees, said he is concerned that the labor commission will be able to effectively absorb the workload of the mediation board. ‘I don’t see how you are going to be able to do both things without just rubber-stamping the decisions of businesses,’ Jacob said. Prior to joining AFSCME, a union that represents many state workers, Jacob was labor commission chairman. The task of reviewing and hearing workers’ compensation and unemployment cases alone is a full-time job, Jacob said. ‘It was just mind-boggling,’ Jacob said. ‘They were just constantly piling on cases.’” [[Nevada Daily Mail](#), 7/28/05]

**Since Hamra Became President, Hamra Enterprises Has Donated to Multiple Republican Candidates in Missouri.** Searches of Missouri campaign finance records identified the following contributions from Hamra Enterprises to Republican candidates since Hamra became President and CEO in 2011.

| Recipient                      | Amount | Date     |
|--------------------------------|--------|----------|
| Citizens to Elect Kurt Schafer | \$200  | 9/30/11  |
| Friends of Darrell Pollock     | \$250  | 12/27/11 |

[[Missouri Ethics Commission](#), accessed 1/26/24; [Missouri Ethics Commission](#), accessed 1/26/24]

- **Both Schafer and Pollock Were Anti-Choice Republicans.** In 2010, Schafer received an ‘anti-choice’ rating from NARAL Pro-Choice Missouri. In 2011 and 2012, Pollock received a 0 percent approval rating from Planned Parenthood Advocates in Missouri. [[Votesmart](#), accessed 1/26/24; [Votesmart](#), accessed 1/26/24]
- **In 2015, Schafer Voted to Make Missouri a “Right to Work” State.** In May 2015, St. Louis Public Radio reported, “After shutting down a Democratic filibuster, the Missouri Senate voted 21-13 to approve an anti-union measure that would make Missouri a ‘right-to-work’ state. ... The bill would bar employers and unions from requiring all workers in a bargaining unit to pay dues. Backers say the ban would make Missouri more attractive to businesses, while opponents say the aim is to drive down wages and curb unions’ political clout. ... Supporters include the Missouri chapter of Americans for Prosperity, a conservative group with ties to the Koch brothers. ... Opponents, meanwhile, also pointed to support from the American Legislative Exchange Council, another conservative group, and vowed to make the Senate vote an issue in next year’s elections. Labor leaders already are signaling out several Republicans who voted for ‘right to work’ after previously receiving union support. They include Sen. Kurt Schafer, R-Columbia, who’s running for attorney general in 2016, and Sen. Eric Schmitt, R-Glendale, who’s running for state treasurer.” [[St. Louis Public Radio](#), 5/12/15]