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## Hosp union protests vs. outsourcing

**BROOKLYN** laundry workers who clean and deliver hospital linens and uniforms rallied yesterday in a fight over privatization.

About 200 members of District Council 37 waved signs that said "Privatization ... the cut that never heals" in the protest in front of the Health and Hospitals Corp.'s lower Manhattan headquarters.

Many of the jobs are based at Brooklyn Central Laundry in Crown Heights. The plant has been cleaning up after 13 city hospitals and nursing homes since 1961.

That long history is a big part of the problem, the HHC says. The repairs, maintenance and equipment needed to upgrade the plant could cost roughly \$14 million.

Instead, as part of a larger cost-cutting plan to combat a \$1.3 billion budget deficit, the HHC is hoping to save \$72 million by outsourcing the work to Sodexo — which already provides the HHC's food — and Unitex, based in Yonkers, Westchester County.

Employees would be shifted to other jobs within the HHC, said agency spokeswoman Ana Maren-go. But DC 37 wants to keep the 180 positions from being eliminated.

**Katie Nelson**