IMPORTANCE OF MIDTERM ELECTIONS

A MESSAGE FROM GENERAL PRESIDENT JAMES P. HOFFA

On Tuesday, Nov. 4, Teamsters everywhere should vote for the candidate or candidates who are best for working families. If you haven't already, start educating yourself on who is running for office and whether your union has endorsed a candidate.

Four years ago, hardworking Americans learned firsthand the consequences of staying home instead of supporting politicians who value their contributions to our nation. Since then, we've increasingly seen the views of billionaire businessmen like the Koch brothers take priority over those of the middle class. At a time when many workers continue to struggle to support their families, we can't afford to sit this election out. So the Teamsters are ramping up our efforts to elect candidates who will listen to the rest of us.

There is no shortage of reasons for Teamsters to care about the midterm elections in November, but here are a few big ones: right-to-work legislation, the minimum wage, and the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP)—an unfair trade deal in the vein of NAFTA.

This year, the Teamsters Union has also started an online Election Action Center at www.teamster.org/election-center. On the site, you can find out how to register in your state, as well as access the union's Congressional Voting Scorecard. As Election Day nears, we'll be putting more information and resources on the page.

James P. Hoffa

Teamsters Newspaper, Magazine & Electronic Media Workes News

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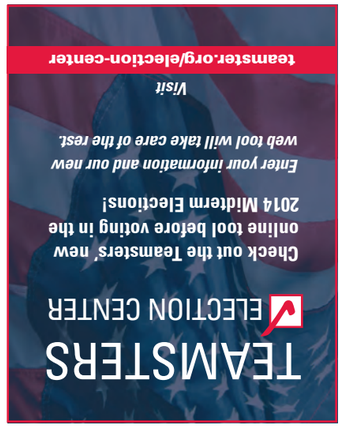

NEWSPAPER News

James P. Hoffa, General President | Ken Hall, General Secretary-Treasurer | Joseph Molinero, Conference Director

MEMBER WINS BACK PAY FROM BALTIMORE SUN

Local 355 Goes to Bat for Teamster

"Being a member of this union is the best thing a worker can do for himself. I learned a great deal during this process about how the union and the company operate, and how the legal system works in the labor-management arena."

–Donald Liggins

A member of Local 355 who is a driver with the Baltimore Sun newspaper has been awarded back pay after a lengthy arbitration.

Donald Liggins, a member of Local 355 in Baltimore, has been a fleet driver for the Baltimore Sun newspaper since 1991. However, in November 2009, Liggins was terminated following a three-month investigation into the cause of an accident in which Liggins was seriously injured and a company fleet truck was significantly damaged.

After nearly two years, Liggins was returned to work after an arbitrator ruled the company had failed to prove just cause when it terminated him for "gross negligence of duty and will-full misconduct." Also part of the decision was full retroactive pay back to the date of Liggins' termination.

Although the company did put Liggins back to work it refused to pay the back wages, citing contract language it interpreted as allowing it to hold an employee financially responsible for damages incurred as a result of a preventable accident.

The local filed suit in federal court to force payment. Finally, a little more than four years after his termination, Liggins received his back pay.

"I wouldn't have gotten through this without my faith that God would see me – all of us – through this. I was down to the bare bones," said Liggins, referring to the financial strain on "the long road to justice."

"Jimmy Deene, business agent at Local 355, worked tirelessly on my case because it wasn't just important for me to win the case, it was important for all my union brothers and sisters. We had to win. An outcome for the company would impact others down the road," Liggins said.

"Being a member of this union is the best thing a worker can do for himself. I learned a great deal during this process about how the union and the company operate, and how the legal system works in the labor-management arena.

"I want to extend my sincere thanks to Denis Taylor, Jimmy, any other business agents who helped, and my shop stewards who were there for me throughout the process. Most important, I want to thank my union brothers and sisters who supported me," Liggins said.

A MESSAGE FROM DIVISION DIRECTOR JOSEPH MOLINERO

LEADING IN A CHANGING INDUSTRY

With the proliferation of digital publishing in the news market today, the resources allocated toward traditional print publishing has diminished.

Larger newspaper companies are purchasing smaller ones in order to consolidate reporting, design and printing costs while at the same time realize the most value from the revenue streams of advertisers and subscriptions.

Yet, our Teamsters Newspaper conference has been active defending the contracts we have representing members at national and local newspapers.

Employers try to cut wages and benefits, but we are standing strong and fighting back in order to protect the good contracts we have. You, our members, deserve to work in a safe environment for good pay and benefits.

We will continue to lead forward, despite the rapidly changing industry.

Newspaper and Specialty Media Printers Join Local 117

Veteran Employees of Web, Offset, Sheet-fed and Letterpress Techniques

Printing and production workers at the Seattle Times newspaper, as well as some specialty printers in the Seattle area, have voted to merge with Local 117.

"These new Teamsters come to us as the result of a merger that was approved by the members of Graphic Communications International Union Local 767-M and the members of Teamsters Local 117," said Tracey Thompson, President of Local 117.

The members work in all craft and skill areas in the printing and publishing industry. Every day, they help print, produce and design numerous publications, including the Seattle Times. They operate web and sheet-fed, offset, letterpress, and other specialty presses in shops like Urban Press in SODO and Capitol City Press in Olympia. They handle binding, finishing and shipping of finished products. They are also journalists, graphic artists, typesetters, sales people and support staff.

Weekly News for Working Families

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ELECTION DAY MOTIVATES TEAMSTERS

GETTING OUT THE VOTE ON NOVEMBER 4

The November mid-term elections are right around the corner, and the Teamsters are gearing up to help elect candidates to Congress and in state capitals that put workers' interests ahead of those of big business.

Teamsters General President James P. Hoffa and Secretary-Treasurer Ken Hall are visiting states across the country in an effort to get members out to vote. And they will use the 2010 election cycle as an example of what can happen to workers when they don't show up at the polls.

"Four years ago, hard-working Americans learned firsthand the consequences of staying home instead of supporting politicians who value their contributions to our nation," Hoffa said. "Since then, we've increasingly seen the views of billionaire businessmen like the Koch brothers take priority over those of the middle class. At a time when many workers continue to struggle to support their families, we can't afford to sit this election out. So the Teamsters are ramping up our efforts to elect candidates who will listen to the rest of us."

Teamster leaders and members across the country are already preparing to make sure every Teamster knows the issues, who stands with them and what is at stake in this election. And the level of activity will continue to escalate right up until the election.

Hundreds of Teamster members will be visiting their fellow members at their worksites to discuss the election and the issues. The Teamsters Union has the most aggressive worksite communication programs in organized labor, with voter registration taking on a more important role.

There are many reasons for Teamsters to be motivated to vote this November. They may not be the issues that get highlighted on the evening news, but they are matters that could affect workers' wallets when it comes to pay and job security. Issues like right to work, the minimum wage, worker misclassification and the Trans-Pacific Partnership will all come before the next Congress.

On Election Day, 36 states will hold gubernatorial elections. In the United States Senate, 33 seats are being contested. Wherever there is an important election for working families, the Teamsters Union will be there.

STAY CONNECTED

Visit teamster.org/election-center, the union's new online tool, for the Teamsters Congressional Voting Scorecard and other features. For more information about DRIVE, the union's political action committee, visit teamster.org/content/about-drive.