



Federal Legislative Priorities 115th Congress

Ensure Retirement Security for Working Families: All hard-working Americans should share in the American dream of living their golden years without fear of bankruptcy or poverty. But with pensions, Social Security and key financial reforms under attack many questions remain about whether that will be a reality for millions who are approaching retirement age. Congress must take steps to guarantee that those who played by the rules and were promised retirement benefits have financial security when their working days have ended. The Teamsters Union opposed the Multiemployer Pension Reform Act of 2014. Reinstating the anti-cutback rule and identifying policies that will ensure the long-term health of our nation's multiemployer pension system is our highest legislative priority. To that end, the Teamsters Union supports the Keep our Pension Promises Act which would protect retirees from cuts to their earned pension benefits by reinstating the ERISA anti-cutback rule. The Teamsters Union also supports the Pension Accountability Act which gives retirees the opportunity to make their voices heard through a binding vote on proposed cuts to their pension benefits.

Promote Highway Safety, Protect Commercial Drivers, and Invest in Infrastructure: Over 600,000 Teamsters start their workday by turning a key in a vehicle. Whether they drive a school bus, a UPS van, or an 18-wheeler, our nation's highways and local roads serve as their workplace. Thousands of other Teamsters work in the transportation sector as railroad workers, building tradesmen, or across the aviation industry. Congress should protect the workplace of these Teamsters like they would any other. This means working to ensure these jobs remain stable ladders to the middle class by protecting the wages, working conditions, and benefits that these transportation workers deserve. Specifically, Congress should oppose any attempt to erode wages or working conditions across the transportation industry, including the elimination of payments for non-driving activities, circumvention of state meal and rest break laws, allowing the continued misclassification of drivers as independent contractors, and hasty implementation of new automation technologies. The Teamsters also call on Congress to protect the safety of all motorists by opposing efforts to increase truck size and weight, weaken hours of service regulations, or allow dangerous Mexican trucks access to long-haul operation in the U.S. Our nation's roads, bridges, ports, airports, railroads and mass transit systems are crumbling, and repairing those systems is a crucial part of maintaining a safe workplace for Teamsters and all motorists. The Teamsters Union calls on Congress to identify a sustainable funding mechanism for transportation infrastructure projects and put our nation on a path to having the world-class transportation system we deserve.

Support Fair Trade Agreements: Over the past 20 years, the U.S. global trade deficit has skyrocketed from \$70 billion in 1993 to over \$500 billion in 2016 – resulting in the loss of millions of U.S. manufacturing jobs. The Teamsters Union supports legislation to establish a new trade policy framework for the country, one that creates and protects good jobs at home and supports equitable, sustainable and democratic development abroad. To that end, the Teamsters Union urges Congress to oppose all proposed trade agreements that do not embody these principles.

Protect Worker's Rights, Family Sustaining Wages & Benefits: Giving working people the freedom to form unions and bargain collectively is essential to strengthen our economy and rebuild the middle class. The Teamsters Union urges Congress to support legislation and regulation that gives workers a fair, timely and direct path to form a union, helps workers secure a contract with their employer in a reasonable period of time, and provides meaningful penalties against employers who violate their workers' rights to form a union. We also urge Congress to protect job quality by supporting the continued application of Davis-Bacon prevailing wage provisions to all varieties of federal construction financing; opposing efforts to restrict the use of project labor agreements; addressing the growing problem of worker misclassification; and providing adequate funding for OSHA and the DOL to ensure robust enforcement of wage and hour and health and safety laws and regulations. Additionally, the Teamsters Union has long opposed proposals to tax worker health benefits. Attempts to tax employer provided healthcare benefits through the 40 percent excise tax on high quality health care plans or proposals to cap the tax exclusion for employer sponsored insurance reduce the health benefits that hard working Americans receive and increase their out of pocket costs. We urge congress to protect hard-earned benefits by supporting H.R. S.58/H.R. 173, the Middle Class Health Benefits Tax Repeal Act of 2017 which repeals the excise tax imposed on so-called high-end health care plans by the Affordable Care Act.

Advance Energy Independence and Invest in Energy Infrastructure: Massive new public investments in clean energy technologies, energy efficiency and sustainable energy infrastructure have the potential to save and create millions of jobs. The Teamsters Union supports a balanced approach to comprehensive energy legislation and regulation. One that promotes energy independence by responsibly increasing domestic oil and natural gas production; invests in renewable energy resources like solar and wind as well as low-emission energy sources like natural gas and nuclear energy; furthers new technologies like carbon capture and sequestration; upgrades the nation's power grid and energy delivery infrastructure like pipelines and transmission lines; ensures power utility reliability and protects against increased energy costs to consumers. The Teamsters Union urges Congress to create good, family sustaining jobs by passing a comprehensive energy infrastructure bill this year.

Increase Access to Job Training and Make College More Affordable: To fill 21st century jobs, workers need the skills employers seek. For many, those can be attained by attending college and earning a degree that prepares them for the working world. However, with total U.S. student loan debt reaching more than \$1 trillion and the average individual debt over \$25,000, cost is an ever increasing obstacle. Congress needs to do more to ensure student loan rates remain low so students can better afford their post-secondary schooling. A college degree, however, is not the answer for all people. The Teamsters are at the forefront of worker training, such as our commercial driver's license training program for those leaving the military-- recognized by the Department of Defense as an outstanding program. But there is a need to boost vocational training for the U.S. population at large. The Teamsters Union urges Congress to pass legislation that increases access to vocational training in order to provide options and opportunity for young adults entering the workforce; to support the unemployed and underemployed, to help to rebuild the middle-class, and to ensure that the U.S. workforce is able to compete in the global marketplace.

Build an Economy that Works for Working People: For too long the financial markets have been tipped in the favor of Wall Street and the wealthiest 1% of Americans.. This lack of oversight and regulation has wreaked havoc on the working families who have lost homes, jobs and retirement savings. The Teamsters Union urges Congress to reject attempts to weaken the necessary reforms included in the Dodd-Frank Wall Street Reform and Consumer Protection Act. The projects and policies that will get America working again will require significant public investment for many years to come. To that end, comprehensive tax reform that does not burden the middle class is a necessary complement to our other legislative priorities. The Teamsters Union calls on Congress to address the inequity in our tax system by passing reform which ensures that corporations and the wealthiest among us, pay their fair share, making it easier for working families to regain the security that they've lost.