

TEAMSTERS READY MESSAGE, MUSCLE FOR 2016 ELECTIONS

A MESSAGE FROM GENERAL PRESIDENT JAMES P. HOFFA



Having an idea is one thing. Getting it done is another.

The Teamsters late last year introduced a package of legislative priorities when it unveiled “Let’s Get America Working” (LGAW). And the union saw progress made toward those goals when Congress in December passed its first long-term transportation funding bill in more than a decade.

But not all of our proposals are going to slide through the process so smoothly. There are trillions of dollars’ worth of infrastructure needs not only for roads and rails, but for the nation’s energy and water systems. There is a need to protect the rights of workers to organize, and for better education and vocational training as well. And elected officials must ensure that everyday Americans can have a secure retirement.

Now, the union is debuting a new program for activists that will help make the LGAW platform a reality. “Building Teamster Political Power” is meant to get members involved in making these policies a reality. Locals will identify members who will be trained on how to talk about political issues and persuade their fellow Teamsters on the issues that matter most to this union.

By starting early, the Teamsters can have scores of trained political activists on the ground to participate in the union’s 2016 election program. And we will need every one of them to push back on the message of the corporate candidates who are seeking to reward their contributors.

Remember—Teamster Strong, America Stronger!



James P. Hoffa, General President | Ken Hall, General Secretary-Treasurer | Bubba Davis, Division Director

STRINGER TRUCK TRAINING SUCCESS



Cleveland Local Union Hosts Course

More than 80 rank-and-file members of several Ohio Teamster locals participated in a stringer truck driving course in February that was coordinated by the Teamsters National Pipeline Training Fund (TNPTF). Locals 40, 92, 377, 436, 637 and 957 were represented at the training.

“We assemble experienced trainers to instruct people on the most efficient and safest way to operate these trucks and work with heavy machinery,” Bubba Davis, Director of the Teamsters Building Material and Construction Trade Division. “There are so many pipeline projects coming on-line throughout the country that we have to maintain a rolling schedule of courses.”

The stringer truck driver course is designed to train Class A Commercial Drivers to safely transport pipe using steering trailers in both on-road and off-road situations. Training includes general safety, pre-trip inspections, stretching and shorting the trailer and adjusting steering cables. The course is taught in both classroom and field formats, and in the case of the training at Local 436, the local uses a landfill area directly in back of the union hall.

“There is pipeline work coming to Ohio and

experienced drivers are needed so we were pleased to host this training,” said Fred Crow, business agent at Local 436. “Participants take part in the three-day course which includes classroom instruction and two days on behind the wheel practical training. We even had a snow storm, courtesy of Mother Nature, to simulate adverse road conditions!”

The course length is usually 24 hours with a certificate upon successful completion. “We want experienced drivers that are looking to improve their applicability to new jobs in this growing industry to apply for this course,” said David LaBorde, Director of pipeline construction in the Division. (Prerequisites include Class “A” Commercial Driver’s License with no restrictions, clean driving record, hazardous materials endorsement preferred.)

To assist in the training, the TNPTF has launched a new trailer that is scheduled to be part of as many field trainings as possible. It is used as a mobile classroom with a generator for power, a TV, speakers and classroom furniture. Look for the scenically-painted trailer at the next course in your area.

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A MESSAGE FROM DIVISION
DIRECTOR BUBBA DAVIS

LONG-TERM PROJECTS SET FOR 2016

The Teamsters Union launched a new program last fall, "Let's Get America Working," that calls on the federal government to allocate funding toward infrastructure projects such as rebuilding decaying bridges, highways and more. As Teamster General President Jim Hoffa said, "Infrastructure investment is not about Democrats or Republicans, it's about doing what's right for America. Our nation's bridges, roads, airports and ports are crumbling and it is time for Congress to hammer out a bipartisan plan that invests in our nation's infrastructure."



The platform calls for the country to invest in infrastructure, which in turn will create good jobs for everyday Americans. For example, working on transportation, energy and water projects will put thousands to work in construction jobs across the country. It will improve roads, bridges, ports and other infrastructure, which in turn will help business and improve the U.S. economy.

For our members in both the building trades and pipeline industry, 2016 should be a banner year. There are several big, long-term projects that should start up in the Spring or Summer of this year.

In addition, there will be nearly 100 new spreads of work in the pipeline industry that will be started this year. Mobilization on these projects has already commenced.

All of these projects were discussed during our 4th Annual Pipeline Steward School/Business Agent Conference held in Orlando in mid-February. Please contact your local union for more information on these projects.

Once again, the best preparation for these and other projects start with your local union's area Building Trades Councils. Please feel free to email us at BMCTD@teamster.org.

Teamsters to Launch Program to Build Political Power

New Member Activist Training to Begin in February



This month, the Department of Political and Legislative Action and the Training and Development Department will launch a new political activist program called Building Teamster Political Power. The goal of the program is to establish an army of engaged, active members interested in getting involved in politics—not only for the upcoming election, but for years to come.

For nearly a year, staff members from the Department of Political and Legislative Action have been meeting with Joint Council and local union officers and business agents to listen to ideas about how the Teamsters can improve on their already successful political program. The feedback received pointed to a need to focus on working family issues, and have consistent communication with members who have indicated that they are excited to be part of the Teamsters and believe in our political objectives.

All the ideas the union received have gone into the development of the Building Teamster Political Power program. Each local will be asked to identify members they would want to participate in Member Activist Trainings. At the trainings, members will be taught how to speak about political issues with fellow members, persuasion techniques to get around common objections and how to get involved in politics through their local unions and Joint Councils.

Working with the Training and Development Department, the union will complete trainings before the International Convention in June so there will be a group of trained political activists available to participate in the Teamster election program this cycle. After the classroom-style session, newly trained members will be asked to participate in a real world activity, like phone banking, leafleting or a rally.

If you are interested in participating in the Building Teamster Political Power program please contact the Department of Political and Legislative Action at 202-624-6800.



Last fall, the Teamsters unveiled its "Let's Get America Working" (LGAW) platform that stressed the need for Congress to approve infrastructure investment and defend worker-friendly policies. Members and everyday Americans are already seeing positive results.

The biggest victory came in December when, after more than a decade, Congress approved a five-year, \$305-billion long-term transportation bill that sets a path forward to pay for road, rail and mass transit upgrades. Its passage was somewhat miraculous, given that Capitol Hill is still mired in conflict and unable to come together on much of anything.

"Congress should be congratulated for this major accomplishment," said Teamsters General President Jim Hoffa. "Infrastructure investment provided an opportunity to break the political gridlock in Washington, and elected officials from both parties made the first move toward rebuilding and repairing the trust between government and workers."

But the victories didn't end there. The Teamsters supported a \$1.1 trillion omnibus appropriations bill

signed into law just before Christmas that ensured workers retained their rights to organize on the job and continued to receive comprehensive health insurance from their employers without being financially penalized.

The effort to implement LGAW isn't over yet. In 2016, the union will keep up the fight to defeat the 12-nation Trans-Pacific Partnership and keep American jobs at home. It will also continue its efforts to defeat a proposal by the Central States Pension Fund that would dramatically cut the pensions of tens of thousands of Teamsters.

Going forward, this nation must invest in rebuilding its energy and water systems, as well as make sure union members retain their ability to collectively bargain so they can earn a fair wage. Workers need proper training and access to educational opportunities. And retirement should be made secure by bolstering both pension plans and Social Security.

Teamsters need to join together to make this happen. That way everyone wins.