

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!

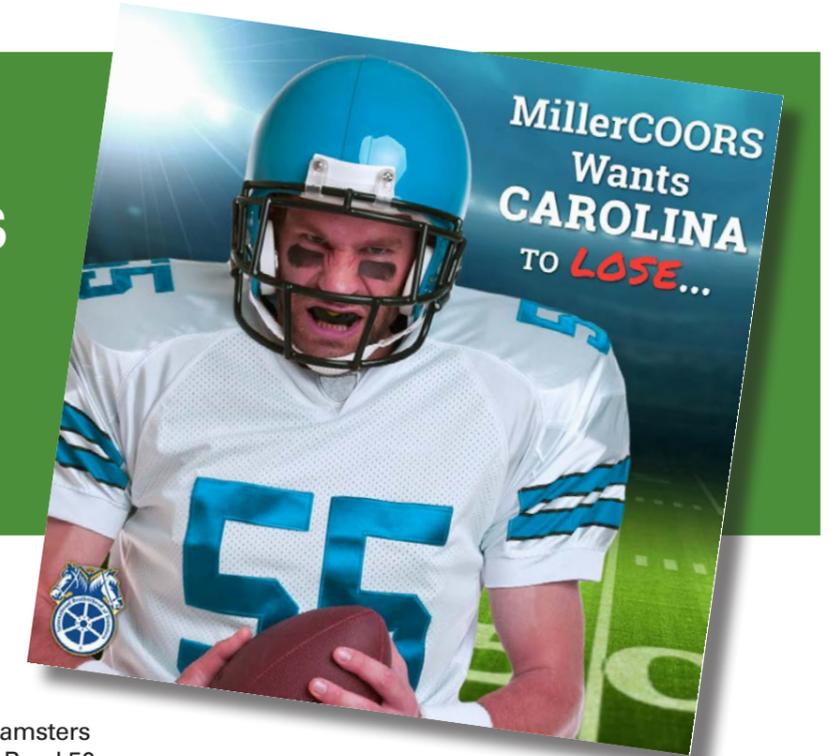


BREWERY & SOFT DRINK News

James P. Hoffa, General President | Ken Hall, General Secretary-Treasurer | David Laughton, Conference Director

TEAMSTERS TARGET CEOS

Social Media Campaign Against MillerCoors



The CEOs of MillerCoors, Molson Coors and SABMiller are the targets of a new social media campaign launched by the Teamsters in February. Originally drawn up around Super Bowl 50, seeing as the Denver (home of Molson Coors) Broncos were competing against the North Carolina (site of Eden brewery) Panthers, the campaign has now transformed into a nationwide effort to turn up the heat on the company’s plan to close the award-winning Eden brewery.

“Shutting the Eden brewery will destroy more than 500 good jobs and devastate North Carolina families,” said Jim Hoffa, Teamsters General President.

“We believe the decision to shut the Eden facility and eliminate more than 10 percent of MillerCoors’ U.S. production capacity is part of a strategy to reduce supply and raise prices in the U.S. market,” Hoffa said. “It’s a bad deal for North Carolina and a bad deal for consumers.”

Eden Most Profitable, Safe

During Super Bowl 50 weekend, Teamsters from Local 391 and others handbilled North Carolina bars and restaurants encouraging fans to use social media to send a message to MillerCoors to keep the Eden brewery open and operational.

The Eden brewery has been named MillerCoors’ brewery of the year for three of the last five years. It is one of the most efficient, productive and profitable facilities in the company’s whole system according to MillerCoors’ analysis.

And, earlier this month, MillerCoors named Eden as number one in worker safety. Upon hearing this during an interview with Vernon Gammon, Secretary-Treasurer of Local 391, Rick Smith, labor radio show host, said, “It doesn’t make sense that the company would want to close this plant which has been number one in productivity and now, safety!”

Support for the social media campaign has been strong, with more than 2,500 e-mails already sent to the CEOs to protest their plan.

“It is not too late for MillerCoors to save this world-class brewery,” said David Laughton, Director of the Teamsters Brewery Conference.

To send your letter, go to: ibt.io/eden

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CHICAGO MEMBERS WIN AGAINST COCA-COLA

Our members at Local 727 in Chicago showed their strength in December when they took a stand for a good contract, and I congratulate them on winning a new three-year agreement with Coca-Cola. With companies making record profits it is only fair that our members, who are the backbone of Coca-Cola's operations and success, can earn a good living and benefits.

While walking the picket line and not backing down in bargaining succeeded with Coca-Cola, we are venturing into new types of campaigns with other tough battles. MillerCoors, which announced they intend to close their most profitable and safe brewing facility in the country (Eden, N.C.), are now our target using social media as a weapon. Through the use of online letters, Facebook posts and the Teamster.org website, more than 2,500 people have already sent the CEOs of MillerCoors, Molson Coors and SAB Miller a letter urging them to keep the Eden facility open. This effort was inaugurated during Super Bowl 50 weekend and in addition to the social media campaign, local union members also leafletted North Carolina sports bars with a special "MillerCoors Wants North Carolina To Lose" flier.

I encourage all of our members to go to the online letter site, fill it out and send it in to support the 500 Teamster members (brewers, bottlers, packagers, warehousemen) who are in danger of losing their jobs at Eden. Let's keep the momentum going and send in thousands more letters!



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, leafletting 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.



CHICAGO TEAMSTERS APPROVE NEW COCA-COLA AGREEMENT

Wages and Health Benefits Improved

Local 727 members voted by a 17-to-1 margin in January to ratify a new three-year contract with Coca-Cola Refreshments in Niles and Alsip, Ill.

The agreement provides annual wage increases, retroactivity and improved health and welfare benefits for 319 production and warehouse workers and transport drivers.

"From the very beginning, the hardworking men and women at Coca-Cola Refreshments wanted their voices heard, and by standing together they've achieved a strong contract that respects the work that they do," said John T. Coli, International Vice President and Secretary-Treasurer of Local 727. "The union applauds each and every one of our members for staying unified and showing us all what can be accomplished through fair and responsible collective bargaining."

Local 727 secured the agreement after members nearly unanimously authorized an unfair labor practice strike against Coca-Cola Refreshments and took to the picket line for 27 days on Dec. 3. The union continued to work toward a new contract during the unfair labor practice strike through traditional bargaining and federal mediation. Both sides reached tentative agreement on Dec. 29.

The contract vote was held following Local 727's general membership meeting and Coca-Cola Teamsters voted 170-10 to approve the agreement. The new three-year contract expires April 30, 2018.

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