

ROLLBACK OF WORKERS' RIGHTS AT STAKE IN NOVEMBER

A MESSAGE FROM GENERAL PRESIDENT JAMES P. HOFFA



Teamster members and other workers are facing a significant political challenge in this election year. Big business and corporate apologists are continuing their push to strip unions of their ability to collectively bargain by pushing so-called right-to-work (RTW) legislation. And if they are successful, more

workers could lose their rights on the job.

Such efforts have already been successful in West Virginia, where earlier this year the Legislature overrode the veto of the governor to implement RTW and roll back the state's prevailing wage law. While supporters there promised more jobs will result from the move, history shows us that lower pay for residents will be the likely result. And that's not something West Virginians, or anyone else, needs.

But what happens if this country's voters decide to elect candidates in November who don't represent workers' values? Given the current make-up of Congress and many state legislatures, it is definitely possible that RTW could become a reality in more states or even nationwide. And that would be devastating for millions of families.

Those living in RTW states have a higher poverty rate than those in ones that support collective bargaining. In fact, nine of the 10 highest poverty states are RTW. That, in part, is attributable to lower salaries and benefits. Those with no rights at work make almost \$1,500 a year less. They are also less likely to receive employer-based health insurance or pensions.

Teamsters must help lead the charge to defeat efforts to spread anti-worker legislation. RTW is a ruse. Now pro-worker forces need to spread that message so everyday Americans understand what is at stake on Election Day.

(message and data rates may apply)
Text "IBT" to 86466

SIGN UP FOR UPDATES 

FOLLOW US ON TWITTER 
Follow @Teamsters on Twitter

LIKE US ON FACEBOOK 
www.facebook.com/teamsters

Teamsters Public Services News

25 Louisiana Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20001



Non-Profit
U.S. Postage
PAID
Washington, DC
Permit # 4481



PUBLIC SERVICES News

James P. Hoffa, General President | Ken Hall, General Secretary-Treasurer | Michael Filler, Division Director



More than 1,500 Contra Costa County, Calif., workers joined Local 856 in a landslide vote in February. Eighty-five percent of workers in the health services, general maintenance, and licensed vocational nurse/aide units who cast ballots chose Teamster representation. More than two-thirds of eligible employees participated in the election.

"The high participation level in the election and overwhelming vote in favor of the Teamsters is a loud statement that things need to change at the county," said Peter Finn, Secretary-Treasurer of San Bruno, Calif.-based Local 856.

"The strong vote result is an important first step in our fight to ensure the valuable work done by county workers for the communities they serve throughout Contra Costa is recognized. We are committed to using all the resources necessary to make that happen," Finn said.

Contra Costa Teamsters serve the public throughout the county. They staff hospitals, clinics and mental health facilities, as well as maintain essential public infrastructure and safety.

Worker Issues
Finn said affordable health care was one of the most important issues for the Contra Costa workers.

"There are community health workers making less than \$14 an hour who must pay \$800 a month for a Kaiser plan," Finn said.

Some of the new Teamsters also said respect was an important issue. The workers said they not only want respect from their employer, but from their union.

"We organized with the Teamsters because we want county management to respect us as a real union," Cynthia O'Brien, an ultrasound technologist with the county's Health Services Department, said in an interview with the Contra Costa Times.

Next Steps
The local has been holding trainings for their new members. In February and March, Local 856 had "all-member bargaining training," where all Contra Costa County Teamsters were invited to attend a workshop on public sector bargaining law and Teamster negotiating skills.

SIGNS OF A PROMISING FUTURE

When a majority of bargaining unit members is actively involved in their Teamster local, it sends a strong message to employers, politicians and the public. The significance of such power at the bargaining table and elsewhere cannot be overstated.

There are many ways to invest in building a sustainable and respected local, such as attending union meetings, completing union surveys and volunteering to participate in union-sponsored events. Remember, activism grows and solidarity is reinforced when members speak to members about their positive union experiences.

An engaged and informed unionized workforce is what labor's opponents fear. While face-to-face conversations continue to be an important component in an effective communications system and help to reinforce relationships, social media has taken a prominent role in the way people interact. Every Teamster local must utilize a variety of methods to both share information and receive input from bargaining unit members.

So, what lies ahead? Recently, the sanctity of public sector collective bargaining agreements, as well as the resources needed to negotiate and enforce those contracts, was sustained with the Supreme Court's ruling in the fair share case. Had the justices reversed 40 years of law, the ability of dedicated public employees to work together to secure negotiated wages, benefits and working conditions would have been undermined.

Building a solid membership foundation within each bargaining unit is the best way to achieve a promising future. That includes ensuring that each eligible public employee has full membership status, is communicated with on a frequent and ongoing basis and participates in meaningful ways. Relying on the TEAM in Teamster will make a difference!



Campaigns Show Bipartisan Backing for Infrastructure

Support for infrastructure investment is growing on both sides of the political aisle. Presidential candidates are talking about it. The media shows images of our deteriorating roads, railways and water systems. Something needs to be done.

Luckily, the Teamsters unveiled its "Let's Get America Working" platform last year that provides a detailed roadmap for how this nation should prioritize such investment. It notes that maintaining, rebuilding and repairing our transportation, energy and water networks benefit workers by creating good-paying construction jobs that often pay prevailing wages. At the same time, such work also helps the economy by improving systems needed by businesses nationwide.

There are many infrastructure problems that need to be addressed. They include:

- More than 59,000 structurally deficient bridges nationwide, crossed by 215 million vehicles each day, according to the American Road & Transportation Builders Association;
- 54 percent of urban roads in substandard or out-of-date condition, according to "TRIP," a national transportation research group;
- Rail infrastructure supporting an increased volume of oil tanker cars, which have increased from 9,500 in 2008 to more than 400,000 in 2013, according to the Brotherhood of Maintenance of Way Employees, but without sufficient structural improvements to the rail system;
- Upgrading energy delivery infrastructure like pipelines and transmission lines; and
- Replacing pipes in aging water systems to avoid lead contamination like what's happening in Flint, Mich.

Rebuilding, repairing and reinvestment doesn't just need to be about transportation and energy projects. It can be about rebuilding and repairing the trust between government and workers by reinvesting in the people that have and can continue to make this country great. Better pay will lead to more spending and improve our quality of life. That way we all win.

EXPOSING CORPORATE DIRTY TRICKS

DOL Rule Change Sheds Light on Anti-Union Tactics



It is clear to most people that corporations hold numerous advantages over everyday Americans when it comes to power in the workplace. But thankfully, the Obama administration just took a step to close a loophole that will shine a spotlight on those engaging in anti-union activities.

The Labor Department issued its final "persuader" rule language in March after nearly five years of consideration which will require management consultants and attorneys involved with creating anti-union propaganda to disclose their efforts to dissuade workers from organizing and collectively bargaining. Previously, these firms could avoid reporting such work as long as they did not directly contact workers.

A new policy was needed because nearly three-quarters of companies hire outside consultants and attorneys to try and defeat organizing drives. Yet these firms-for-hire could shield their activities due to an overly broad interpretation of the Labor Management Reporting and Disclosure Act of 1959 (LMRDA).

"For years, big business has taken advantage of the nation's broken system. The Teamsters have seen their work first hand," said Rome Aloise, an IBT International Vice President and director of the Teamsters Dairy Conference and Food Processing Division. "They've paid millions to consultants and law firms to do the dirty work of misdirecting and intimidating employees. In exchange, these same companies publicly could wash their hands of the whole thing."

The rule change puts these union-busting consultants and lawyers on equal footing as employers who must

disclose such activities under LMRDA. And it also levels the playing field with unions, who are required to file detailed financial disclosure forms each and every year that includes receipts and expenditures.

With this policy shift, the federal government is saying it won't allow corporations to tamp down on the collective bargaining rights of workers across the country. Workers deserve a fair shake on the job. But too few policymakers at the federal and state level have been willing to stand up for hard-working Americans who are just trying to earn enough to support their families. These changes to the persuader rule don't solve the problem entirely. But they are a start.

CONTRA COSTA CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

"The success of this organizing campaign and winning these elections is only the beginning of our fight," Finn said. "We must keep this momentum and demand that Contra Costa County treat its employees with the respect and dignity that they deserve."

"There is strength in numbers and by continuing to stand together with your coworkers we can achieve a strong Teamster contract with overdue pay increases and reductions in soaring health care costs," Finn said.