

# 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.



# WAREHOUSE News

James P. Hoffa, General President | Ken Hall, General Secretary-Treasurer | Steve Vairma, Division Director

## FRESH WIN

### Local 929 Warehouse Members Ratify Groundbreaking Agreement



In the City of Brotherly Love, Teamster brothers and sisters are loving their new contract.

Recently, about 450 workers at the Philadelphia Food Distribution Center voted overwhelmingly to ratify a winning five-year agreement that includes wage increases, employer-paid health care and increased employer contributions to the pension plan, among other gains.

The single agreement covers members of Local 929 in Philadelphia who work for nearly 30 employers in a variety of jobs, including truck drivers, warehouse workers, sales representatives, cashiers and more.

"We were able to negotiate wage and pension increases, as well as fully employer-paid health and welfare coverage for five years, without a single giveback," said Rocky Bryan, President of Local 929. "We are very pleased with this agreement."

"The Philadelphia Food Distribution Center Teamsters

deserve the best, and we are happy to have negotiated a strong agreement worthy of the hard work and dedication they bring to the job every day," said Bill Hamilton, International Vice President and President of Joint Council 53.

For these members who work in the wholesale produce industry, in addition to employer-paid health care coverage, the contract includes annual increases of 5 percent in employer contributions to the defined benefit pension plan under the Teamsters Pension Fund of Philadelphia and Vicinity.

#### Seeds of Success

At the Philadelphia Food Distribution Center, Teamsters form a flurry of activity in the massive 700,000 square foot, 24/7 facility. The members move throughout the center on power jacks, loading and unloading fresh wholesale fruits and vegetables.

The produce is transported, stored, inspected and sold by Teamsters in a process where everyone helps each other out to move efficiently and get the job done.

The seeds of success were planted early on for Teamsters at the distribution center. A strong foundational contract was built upon over the years to produce the latest agreement, with guarantees that bring comfort to the members.

"We're excited to have a contract that's a five-year commitment from the store owners to us. It's employment that we can count on. It's a promise and that's a good thing," said John Friesema, a 19-year year Local 929 member and shop steward. "These are all family guys who've been here, some of them for 25, 30 or 35 years, and many have kids and grandkids. We can count on buying a house or a car because we know the wages are going to be there."

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Teamsters Warehouse News

## A BUSY YEAR FOR BARGAINING AND ORGANIZING IS UNDER WAY

New contracts and new organizing efforts are keeping warehouse Teamsters busy throughout the country. Locals have been working hard to build upon our existing agreements with companies large and small, and our members have notched a number of significant victories in recent months.

More than 400 Local 929 members ratified a groundbreaking contract at the Philadelphia Food Distribution Center, securing a five-year deal that further strengthens and increases wages, health care benefits and pensions. These longtime Teamsters—vital to the city's economy—won these improvements without any concessions.



Teamsters in Chicago are also raising industry standards with two big contract wins at Jewel, a regional grocery chain. Two separate contracts covering almost 900 warehouse workers, drivers, dispatchers and load planners represented by Local 710 ratified contracts ensuring improvements in health insurance, wages, seniority rights and other benefits.

In California, warehouse drivers who fought a drawn-out organizing battle at United Natural Foods, Inc. beginning in 2013 won a strong agreement that brings job protections, overtime and other important gains. The contract win for these members of Local 63 is a pivotal one for all warehouse members, especially those in Southern California where thousands of Teamsters work in the region's food supply chain.

Beyond negotiating and protecting industry-leading contracts, we are building strength in the realm of organizing. A number of ongoing campaigns are ramping up at US Foods and we are continuing to strategize on building Teamster power across the Sysco-US Foods network.

As the 2016 election season heats up, making Teamsters' voices heard in the political arena is more important than ever. We need more elected officials who will fight for workers, standing up against the power and greed of corporate interests. In the coming months, we'll be calling upon Warehouse Division members and all Teamsters to get involved in the political process as we roll out our union's program for the upcoming elections. We're only as strong as our membership—that's as true today as it always has been.



## 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.

## From Chicago to California

### Warehouse Workers, Drivers Ratify Agreements at Jewel and UNFI

Longtime warehouse Teamsters in the Chicagoland area and members in Moreno Valley, Calif. won strong contracts in March. The first victory came for nearly 900 Jewel grocery warehouse workers and drivers represented by Chicago's Local 710, followed by a first contract secured by California UNFI drivers with Local 63.

New five-year contracts at Jewel were ratified on March 6. The separate agreements include many of the same Teamster benefits and protections for all workers servicing Chicago stores, including dispatchers and load planners. The Local 710 bargaining committee of rank-and-file members and Teamster representatives fought for weeks during marathon negotiation sessions to secure the strong new contracts.

The drivers' agreement was ratified by a 2-to-1 margin, and warehouse workers overwhelmingly approved their new contract 4-to-1.

"The entire bargaining committee fought to unify the membership and reach fair agreements that reflect the hard work and sacrifices these workers have made under previous contracts," said John T. Coli, International



Vice President and Trustee of Local 710. "With these new agreements, Local 710 has successfully changed the culture of labor, respect and communication at Jewel."

The contracts, which expire in 2021, offer substantial wage and health care improvements as well as new seniority rights, 401(k) improvements and other benefits.

Local 710 Jewel members work out of the company's distribution center in Melrose Park and service grocery products to all Jewel stores across the Chicago area.

### Justice in Moreno Valley

Drivers who distribute natural and organic food products for United Natural Foods, Inc. (UNFI) in Moreno Valley unanimously ratified their first Teamster contract in late March, securing job protections, overtime pay after 40 hours and a 40-hour weekly guarantee.

"This just goes to show that when workers stick together and fight smart we can accomplish anything," said Larry Cerda, one of the UNFI drivers who spearheaded the unionization effort.

The Teamsters represent tens of

thousands of workers in the food chain in Southern California alone and hundreds of thousands across the country. The natural and organic foods sector began as a niche market but has grown rapidly in recent years and now accounts for a significant portion of the overall food market. Despite heightened scrutiny on the sustainable business practices of companies in the sector, wages and working conditions have yet to catch up to traditional, more densely unionized sectors of the industry.

"This contract is a shining example of what we can accomplish when we combine a union organizing and bargaining strategy that engages various stakeholders including customers, shareholders and the broader community," said Randy Cammack, Secretary-Treasurer of Local 63 and President of Joint Council 42.

"The drivers, Local 63 and Joint Council 42 should be so proud of what they've accomplished. I believe we will very soon have many opportunities to reproduce their success in campaigns to organize natural foods distribution employees across the country," said Steve Vairma, Director of Teamsters Warehouse Division.