

INTERNATIONAL BROTHERHOOD OF TEAMSTERS

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June 23, 2015

The Honorable Harold Rogers, Chairman
Committee on Appropriations
H-305 Capitol
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Nita Lowey, Ranking Member
Committee on Appropriations
H-305 Capitol
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Chairman Rogers and Ranking Member Lowey:

On behalf of the 1.4 million members of the International Brotherhood of Teamsters, I am writing to express our strong opposition to the draft Fiscal Year 2016 Appropriations Bill for the Departments of Labor, Health and Human Services, Education, and Related Agencies that the Committee will consider this week.

The bill before you threatens the safety and welfare of working men and women, and "short changes" the future of our children. The bill would undermine important worker rights by providing totally inadequate funds for the principal programs that protect the safety and health of America's workers; guarantee the right of employees to organize and bargain collectively; enforce our nation's wage and hour, and child labor laws; and protect our workers' pensions and equal opportunity rights. Particularly troubling are the steep cut in funding and the restrictions placed on the National Labor Relations Board. These actions will severely impede the Board's ability to fulfill its mission and to provide anything remotely resembling timely recourse to workers and will strip millions of workers of existing protections that safeguard their right to organize and bargain collectively.

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The bill fails to provide adequate resources to assist dislocated workers and for unemployment insurance and employment services. Corporations show no sign of ending their romance with mergers, "downsizing", and exporting the jobs of U.S. workers as a means of further increasing their profits. Workers need assistance and training to enable them to find new employment and to support themselves and their families.

The bill also fails to provide adequate resources to improve our children's schools. Further, the cut in student aid will prevent many families, including many of our members, from sending their children to college.

The working men and women of this nation deserve to be treated with respect and dignity. They deserve a safe workplace. They deserve avenues of timely recourse against abusive employment practices. They deserve the opportunity to provide for their families, to be paid a decent wage, to receive the wages they have earned, and to know their pensions are secure. Their children deserve schools that are safe, secure, and conducive to learning.

The draft bill before you fails on these counts. It cannot be sufficiently improved through amendment. We urge you to reject this legislation.

Sincerely,


James P. Hoffa
General President

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