

Right to Work is Wrong – Let's Outlaw It

A MESSAGE FROM GENERAL PRESIDENT JAMES P. HOFFA



A Republican-controlled Congress has taken aim at workers' rights in 2017, including the ability to collectively bargain. But now a group of lawmakers have said "Enough!"

Sen. Elizabeth Warren (D-Mass.) and Rep. Brad Sherman (D-Calif.) are the lead sponsors of legislation introduced in late September that would outlaw right-to-work (RTW) laws in the U.S. It is a fitting push back on efforts to curtail the ability of workers in this country to organize and stand united against their employers.

As of now, 28 states have passed RTW laws. While supporters claim that the law promotes job growth, history shows otherwise. The policy is a ruse that only causes a race to the bottom for wages.

RTW states have a higher poverty rate than states with union rights. 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 retirement benefits.

That's why it makes sense for elected officials to push back on these lousy laws. They strip unions of the ability to collect dues from all workers who benefit from union-negotiated contracts. Unions are forced to use their time and money to provide benefits to free riders who won't pay their fair share.

Canada is now fighting to have language barring RTW laws placed in an updated version of NAFTA. That's a good thing. Lawmakers must take a fresh look at these measures.



Teamsters Freight News
25 Louisiana Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20001



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



FREIGHT News

James P. Hoffa, General President | Ken Hall, General Secretary-Treasurer | Ernie Soehl, Division Director

Organizing Campaign at XPO Gains Momentum



VICTORY IN NEW JERSEY BUILDS STRENGTH

The campaign to organize workers and build Teamster power at XPO Logistics, Inc. is gaining momentum with a worker victory in New Jersey and numerous actions shedding light on the company's global greed.

In mid-April, XPO freight drivers in Trenton, N.J. voted to join Local 701, boosting the nationwide workers' campaign for fairness at the giant transportation and logistics company.

The 34 drivers in Trenton join the hundreds of workers nationwide who have already formed their union as Teamsters. The earlier freight victories were in Aurora, Ill.; Miami; Laredo, Texas; Vernon, Calif.; and King of Prussia, Pa. In addition, XPO warehouse workers in North Haven, Conn. voted to become Teamsters.

"The victory in Trenton shows

that the XPO workers' campaign is getting stronger and stronger, as freight, warehouse and port drivers fight for a more secure future," said Ernie Soehl, Director of the Teamsters National Freight Division, who is also President of Local 701 in North Brunswick, N.J. "The workers help make XPO very successful and they deserve to be rewarded for their hard work."

Vicious Tactics

Throughout the campaign, XPO has employed vicious anti-worker, anti-union tactics to intimidate and scare workers. The company's latest abhorrent act took place when it fired three drivers in Trenton who supported the union.

In late May, a group of more than 50 Teamsters led by International Vice President Fred Potter, Soehl and supporters, including state lawmakers, clergy and the head of the state AFL-CIO, protested outside the XPO Logistics terminal and demanded that the company reinstate the three fired workers. Local unions worked together and all three discharged workers have been hired by Teamster-represented freight companies and the U.S. Postal Service while awaiting determinations by the NLRB.

"XPO has spent hundreds of thousands of dollars to run vicious anti-worker, anti-union campaigns across the country, but the company has reached new lows by unlawfully firing three workers here in the Trenton area," Soehl said. "Our message is

continued on page 2

A BUSY FIRST YEAR

In February, General President Jim Hoffa appointed me as the Director of the Teamsters National Freight Division, and it has been an honor serving you, our freight members, over the past eight months.



Prior to becoming Director, I served as Eastern Region Freight Coordinator and I am also President of Local 701 in North Brunswick, N.J. I also serve as the Secretary-Treasurer of Joint Council 73 in New Jersey.

I want to thank former Director Tyson Johnson for his dedication to the Teamsters, especially the National Freight Division.

Together, we face many challenges. Over the years, we have lost union density in the freight industry, which is why our ongoing campaign to organize at XPO Logistics is so important. Thank you to those helping out with this campaign and reaching out to the XPO workers.

We also face challenges from technology, as the story about driverless vehicles in this newsletter addresses.

I want to assure you that my team and I are fully committed to protecting the interests and livelihoods of all Teamster freight members.

In the days ahead, we will continue to face these challenges. But I am confident that when we work together, we will have the energy, commitment and strength to take these challenges on—and win! I look forward to working with many of you and our local unions.

I appreciate your support.

Organizing Campaign at XPO Gains Momentum *continued from page 1*

clear: We will not tolerate the company firing workers who are exercising their federally protected right to organize.”

Campaign Update

Other major developments in the campaign include:

- In mid-April, a California state agency ordered XPO to pay \$855,000 to four port drivers at its subsidiary XPO Cartage. The drivers, like hundreds of others at XPO and other trucking companies, filed wage and hour claims alleging misclassification as independent contractors.
- In May, XPO shareholders delivered one of the sharpest rebukes of CEO pay so far this proxy year when a near-majority of outside shareholders opposed the company's “say-on-pay” measure. “It is time for XPO CEO Bradley Jacobs to explain to company workers why he is entitled to a huge payout while he cuts the health care and retirement benefits of workers who are making this company so successful,” said Monica Abraham, a quality control inspector for XPO in North Haven, Conn. who spoke at the shareholder meeting and who voted to join Local 443. “Workers shouldn’t be punished while Jacobs gets rich off our backs!”
- In June, port drivers misclassified as independent contractors at XPO Cartage launched a two-day Unfair Labor Practice strike to protest illegal job classification that robs them of their employee rights. Drivers picketed XPO facilities in California, including America’s largest port complex, the twin ports of Los Angeles/Long Beach.
- Later in June, local unions held another national day of action where XPO freight facilities across the nation were leafletted and drivers engaged with Teamster volunteers to discuss unionization at XPO.
- Also in June, more than 100 Teamsters and supporters gathered to raise questions and demand answers to serious concerns about XPO outside an industry conference in Chicago where Jacobs was speaking. The group demanded that Jacobs respond to workers’ concerns about sustainability of the company, mistreatment, pay disparity, company mismanagement and many other issues.
- In July, the ITF (International Transport Workers’ Federation) unveiled an XPO global leadership group to tackle the company’s anti-worker, anti-union stance. The new initiative was announced by the organization’s general secretary, Steve Cotton, from its inaugural meeting in Los Angeles.



Hoffa: Despite Committee Approval, Autonomous Vehicle Bill Needs Work

In late July, Teamsters General President James P. Hoffa issued a statement on the approval of legislation by the House Energy and Commerce Committee that would begin the process of streamlining rules around the testing and development of certain autonomous vehicles.

“The Teamsters Union will continue working with lawmakers to improve the initial legislation that was recently passed out of the House Energy and Commerce Committee. Much work remains to be done and the bill faces a long path forward where numerous issues must be addressed. However, the Teamsters commend the committee and members of Congress for recognizing that a starting point for any discussion on this subject was that no legislation should impact commercial motor vehicles or traditional commercial drivers.

“The wide range of issues that are inherent with vehicles used for commercial purposes warrants an entirely separate discussion and one that the Teamsters will be at the center of. Congress has wisely recognized that any such dialogue is entirely pre-

ature and must be done gradually, in the public view, and with the full engagement of all stakeholders. The millions of workers who make their livelihood in these industries will have an active role to play in shaping the future of their jobs and their industries. It is vital that Congress ensure that any new technology is used to make transportation safer and more effective, not used to put workers at risk on the job or destroy livelihoods and chip away at the middle class.”

Study Sheds Light

Meanwhile, a new study by the University of Michigan’s Transportation Research Institute (UMTRI) says that many licensed drivers have real reservations about driverless cars.

UMTRI found that nearly 46 percent of those surveyed want no vehicle automation at all, while 39 percent favor partial automation. Only about 15 percent want fully driverless vehicles. Why is that? Because not being able to control the vehicle you’re driving is scary to many drivers.

That’s particularly the case when you add trucks into the equation, as an article in the Commercial Carrier

Journal notes:

“If 85 percent of respondents want nothing to do with autonomous cars, it shouldn’t come as a surprise that even more want nothing to do with self-driving heavy trucks. In a similar report, [report authors Brandon] Schoettle and [Michael] Sivak found that nearly 95 percent of U.S. motorists responding to their survey had some level of concern sharing the roads with autonomous trucks and trailers. Nearly 60 percent were ‘very concerned,’ nearly 25 percent ‘moderately concerned’ and 12.2 percent ‘slightly concerned.’”

The Teamsters are at the forefront of highway safety. As it stands, the nation’s roadways can be a dangerous place for motorists. The last thing those traveling U.S. thoroughfares need are out-of-control trucks that jeopardize the lives of others!

No one can stop the technological changes that are coming. As a whole, they can improve Americans’ lives. But entrepreneurs and policy makers must balance the desire for the next big thing with sound public policy that ensures the public good.