

# TEAMSTERS LOCAL 986

MISCELLANEOUS WAREHOUSEMEN DRIVERS AND HELPERS

1198 DURFEE AVENUE • SOUTH EL MONTE, CA 91733 • PHONE (626) 350-9860 • FAX (626) 448-0986

January 31, 2012

Dear Brothers & Sisters at KAG West,

Welcome to the KAG West negotiating team's contract update. We will be issuing an update on a regular basis in order to keep you informed of our progress at the bargaining table. This update will be slightly different than previous ones in that we will go deeper into the specific issues.

To begin with, I want to let you know that Teamsters Local 986 has taken some new steps over the past month to achieve a first contract for KAG West workers in Southern California, including:

- Hiring a top L.A. labor attorney to be our new chief negotiator for KAG West negotiations,
- Flying in a professional negotiating team with national experience in trucking and tank haul from Washington, D.C. to assist at the table at every session,
- Bringing in more union field representatives to communicate directly with KAG employees at the terminals about our goals and to answer your questions, and
- Establishing a Steering Committee of concerned KAG West workers that includes representatives in every yard.

I believe that you'll agree that these steps will assist you and your co-workers in achieving the best contract possible from KAG West. If you would like to become a part of the Steering Committee, please contact Ron Seamans, Jr at 202-409-0430.

Please look closely at the next pages to see updates from the bargaining sessions that took place on January 24<sup>th</sup> and 25<sup>th</sup>. We do not intend to agree to any company proposal that would worsen your current conditions. If you have any questions about the following documents, please let me know.

In solidarity,



Chris Griswold  
Secretary-Treasurer  
Teamsters Local 986





# KAG West

## BARGAINING UPDATE

Despite some recent progress by your Negotiating committee toward reaching a collective bargaining agreement with KAG West, the company has refused to agree to fair and reasonable proposals in some significant areas that you need to know about:

### ECONOMIC ITEMS

To date, the company has offered:

- 1) Only a 25-cent per-hour increase payable at “signing” of the contract which the company has delayed for 16 months to date. Teamsters Local 986 has proposed significantly higher wage increases retroactive to the date negotiations commenced including the \$1.91 wrongfully taken from you. Local 986 is continuing to demand that the company pay the \$1.91 per hour (plus a penalty) that has been found to have been illegally withheld from you by KAG, retroactive to August, 2010.
- 2) No improvements in cost-sharing of the health insurance premiums. This means your health care would be unprotected in the future without something in writing. Local 986 has been fighting to protect and improve your health care benefits throughout these negotiations.
- 3) No agreement on a Teamster pension plan or improving the current 401 (k) provided by KAG (Local 986 has proposed improved vesting schedules and/or an improved company match). KAG seems intent on avoiding any decent retirement for its employees.
- 4) No improvements in paid time-off other than funeral leave. The company continues to believe no one should ever get paid unless they’re actually on the clock.

For example, the union is fighting to get drivers and mechanics some paid sick leave and guarantee the right to take a leave of absence when necessary. These are tough jobs and no one should have to take a pay cut every time they get sick. We want to secure

decent hourly increases for at least three years and get a better shift differential. These are benefits that most trucking industry workers have regardless of their union status, but KAG seems bent on keeping the terms and conditions of employment in SoCal stuck in the last century. KAG needs to realize this is 2012 and not 1912.

### NON-ECONOMIC ITEMS

- 1) The company wants to actually take away some of your civil liberties and due process rights by tying up any state and federal claims against them in a messy and unprecedented arbitration procedure that would spell disaster for the collective bargaining and representation process. The ‘fairness doctrine’ is absent from any of their proposals.
- 2) The company seeks the right to discipline and even terminate employees without regard to the severity of an incident.
- 3) A critical piece of any successful, unionized workplace is the role of “shop stewards”, especially important on first contracts. These fellow union members assist with the “on the ground” administration of an agreement and work to keep a positive relationship between the company and you by handling minor incidents and communications. KAG refuses to have them even mentioned in this contract.

Please note: none of the items above have been agreed to. Rather, they are the major items where bargaining is getting bogged down.

First contracts are always difficult but KAG management’s warped concept of Workers’ Rights has made the process much worse than normal. Nonetheless, we hope the company can move forward at a better pace and with a more reasonable tone in the future. We’re fighting for the best possible contract and we intend to see it through.