



TEAMSTERS LOCAL 700

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Inspector General Report Misrepresentative of Local 700 Members, Full of Glaring Inaccuracies

(CHICAGO) – After reviewing hand-selected complaints and speaking with City of Chicago managers who are looking to protect their own jobs, Inspector General Joseph Ferguson released a report Wednesday, March 30, that misrepresented nearly 1,000 Teamsters Local 700 members and suggested the City of Chicago renege on the 10-year contract signed with Local 700 in 2007.

“The bottom line is, the Inspector General’s report was inaccurate and inconclusive,” said John T. Coli, Local 700 Trustee. “He’s saying anyone can drive these trucks, but our members are certified and trained to handle these 50,000 pound tools – tools that when used improperly can kill. Is the Inspector General going to follow through if these drivers are removed and someone is killed? My guess is he’ll remain silent.”

The roughly 1,000 Local 700-represented Motor Truck Drivers feel the pressures and dangers of understaffing every day. The City attested to the fact that more drivers are needed, not fewer, in an arbitration hearing earlier this week. The questionable report from the Inspector General’s office suggests removing trained, certified workers and replacing them with underprepared, cheaper workers.

“The Inspector General seems blindly unaware that eliminating these crucial positions almost guarantees a costly ‘fix it quick’ solution down the road,” said William P. Logan, Local 700 Assistant Trustee. “It’s these types of rash assumptions that lead to privatization and higher taxes for the residents of Chicago.”

The current 10-year contract was proposed by the City of Chicago in 2007 and was signed the same year. Though the Inspector General encouraged the City to re-open its contract with Local 700, the contract itself contains zero clauses on re-openers.

“Had the Inspector General’s Office taken the time to do complete and accurate research, they would know that Local 700’s contract with the City of Chicago does not allow for contract re-openers,” said Becky Strzechowski, Local 700 Assistant Trustee. “If the IG’s office fumbled on such an obvious fact, how can anyone trust the rest of their research? They just can’t.”

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