



Industrial Trades

The Teamster Industrial Trades News

James P. Hoffa, General President • C. Thomas Keegel, General Secretary-Treasurer • Stephen J. Mack, Director

A Message from General President James P. Hoffa



MAKE YOUR VOICE HEARD

There are many ways for Teamsters to get involved and show support for the Employee Free Choice Act, the most important legislation affecting America's middle class in decades. Our communities, friends, neighbors and members of Congress need to hear from real people why unions are important, and the sooner the better. This bill has broad support, but billions of dollars are being thrown at a misinformation campaign run by anti-worker groups and people are starting to believe the lies about this legislation.

It's important to let your elected officials in D.C. know that you support this bill. When calling or writing, it's helpful to include your story about how you have benefited from a union or about management intimidation during your union election. The web site for the Teamsters Union, at www.teamster.org, has a wealth of material on writing, e-mailing or talking to your elected representatives. If you want to get directly in touch with your congressional representative's office, you can call the Capitol switchboard at 800-828-0498 or e-mail them through www.usa.gov/Contact/Elected.shtml.

Teamsters can also help correct myths while at the same time helping our communities understand why the Employee Free Choice Act is necessary to fix a broken system. Newspapers welcome letters from readers and you can usually find out how to send a letter to the editor by looking on the newspaper's opinion page. Sample letters that you can adapt and responses to the most common arguments are on the Teamsters Union web page devoted to the Employee Free Choice Act.

I urge every Teamster who cares about America's middle class to get involved and make your voice heard on this issue.

DRIVE is a political committee that furthers labor-related goals, including making contributions to support candidates for local, state and federal offices. Individuals may refuse to join or contribute without fear of reprisal.

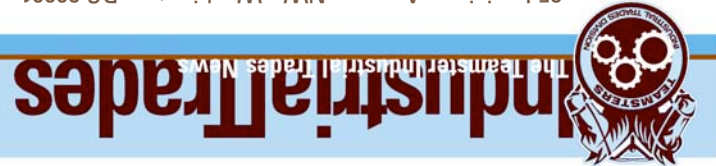
Find out more about this exciting program by talking to your local union, or on the web at www.teamster.org/drive



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Employee Free Choice Now!

Teamsters Can Help Pass Legislation Expanding America's Middle Class

The fight for passage of the Employee Free Choice Act is really about the survival of the middle class and the American Dream," said Jim Hoffa, Teamsters General President.

The Employee Free Choice Act would make it easier for workers to form a union, thereby restoring fairness and the promise of the American Dream to millions of people who have been shut out for far too long. This legislation would swell the ranks of the American middle class while being the engine for economic growth and shared prosperity. This act will also help employees secure a contract in a reasonable period of time and toughen penalties against employers who violate the law. The legislation is supported by President Barack Obama, Vice President

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TLS Workers Ratify Strong Contract



Local 495 Works With Members During Negotiations

Going into contract negotiations with Toyota Logistics Services (TLS), employees knew that the economic downturn would affect the outcome. They also knew that the Teamsters Union had their backs.

"We were aware that these were historically challenging times going into these negotiations, and while the wage increases were not quite as generous as previous contracts, our expectations were exceeded by the gains made in other areas," said John Kobren, a TLS employee and proud member of Covina, California's Local 495.

Kobren is one of approximately 225 TLS Teamsters that recently ratified a new contract by a 3-1 margin. These

workers process imported vehicles from Japan at the Port of Long Beach before they are moved to dealerships.

"The difficulty our nation's economy was going through was certainly an issue during the negotiations, but we were still able to secure a lot of good language," said Bob Lennox, Secretary-Treasurer of Local 495. "These TLS Teamsters work incredibly hard and they deserved improvements in their contract."

Negotiations

Kobren has worked many jobs throughout the facility and has been a team leader for many years. Currently, he expedites the movement of vehicles from when they first reach the port to

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A Message From Division Director Stephen J. Mack

Employee Free Choice

As Teamsters in the Industrial Trades Division, you know better than most how the economic climate of our country can affect our paychecks. Every time I open a



newspaper, more and more hardworking Americans are getting laid off and companies everywhere are attempting to slash health benefits for workers.

That's why it's so encouraging to know that Teamster locals are still fighting tooth and nail to keep benefits and, in some cases, improve on benefits for their members. In this newsletter, you can read about how Local 495 and their TLS Teamsters negotiated a new contract for the bargaining unit that significantly improved their benefits.

But work to protect the interests of Teamsters doesn't stop at the local level. It extends to every part of the union. The International, for example, is deeply involved in the fight for passage of the Employee Free Choice Act.

This commonsense legislation that makes it easier for workers to form a union would mean increased strength for workers everywhere, especially those already in a union. Strength in numbers is one of the basic tenets of the labor movement, and historically, union density in specific industries means better wages and benefits for everyone in that industry.

Please contact your congressional representatives to let them know why you support the Employee Free Choice Act, and visit www.Teamster.org to learn more.

Employee Free Choice Now!

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Joe Biden, Secretary of Labor Hilda Solis, a majority of U.S. Senators and Representatives, and a majority of the American people.

"Even with the support of so many, a flood of corporate cash is being spent on a misinformation campaign on this issue. Suppressing unions is part of a larger effort by CEOs and business interests to prevent working people from getting their fair share," Hoffa said.

Union Workers Make 28 Percent More

Working people are struggling to make ends meet today, and we are in danger of seeing the American Dream disappear. Too often, corporations and their CEOs aren't treating workers fairly. They cut back on health care benefits and give raises that don't even keep up with the cost of living, while CEO salaries and profits go higher and higher.

"These millionaire CEOs and others fighting the Employee Free Choice Act bully their employees who want a union, but these CEOs wouldn't work one day without a written contract that protected their benefits," said Tom Keegel, Teamsters General Secretary-Treasurer. "Due to this mindset, the American middle class has lost a lot of ground and is in danger of losing more if we don't all get involved in this fight."

An important way to help average people get their fair share is to remove unfair barriers to union representation and collective bargaining. The wages of workers in unions are 28 percent higher than those not in unions, and union workers are 62 percent more likely to have employer health coverage, and four times as likely to have a pension.

"The nation's economic mess didn't originate on the shop floor or from a union contract. It started at the highest levels of management. Their harmful ideas hurt the bottom line of their corporations. Wanting to deny workers the option of forming a union without management interference is another of their bright ideas," Keegel said.

Setting the Record Straight

The corporate interests against the Employee Free Choice Act have incorrectly portrayed the bill as eliminating workers' rights to a secret ballot election. This is absolutely not true. The legislation simply gives workers, not bosses, the choice in how they decide whether to form a union, either through a majority of workers signing cards in support of the union, or through an election.

In reality, the corporate interests who are opposed to this bill are the same ones against their employees having a real opportunity of securing fair pay, health insurance, job security and a chance of living the American Dream. Greedy CEOs are realizing they are losing the ability to hold back change to a system that favors them, and they are engaged in an unprecedented campaign to mislead the public on the Employee Free Choice Act and anyone who supports it.

Please help the Teamsters Union make sure the middle class survives the current economic crisis by getting involved to pass the Employee Free Choice Act. For more information, visit www.teamster.org.



Seeking Improvements With the Teamsters

School Bus Workers Joining Union in Drove

School bus drivers and monitors at First Student in Batavia, Illinois are the latest in a string of Teamster organizing victories in the school bus industry.

These workers joined Local 777 to seek improvements in their working conditions, including fair pay, better and more affordable health insurance and fairness on the job. There are 218 workers in the bargaining unit.

"Over the five years that I've worked here, so much has changed and so much has been taken away from us," said Tani Benson, a driver. "Right now I either survive and pay my bills or pay the huge amount that the company's insurance costs, so I go without health insurance. I'm hopeful that we can make the changes we need as Teamsters."

Benson's sentiments are similar to those of the thousands of others in the same dilemma, but the Teamsters Union is making a big difference in the lives of these workers.

This victory is the latest in an effort to organize private school bus and transit workers across the country. Drive Up Standards is a

national campaign to improve safety, service and work standards in the private school bus and transit industry. Since the campaign began in 2006, more than 16,750 workers have become Teamsters.

Drive Up Standards

There are more than 75,000 school bus and transit Teamsters throughout the United States and Canada. At First Student, there are more than 21,000 Teamsters and counting.

More First Student workers are Teamsters than they are members of any other union.

It is this density within the company that has made the Teamsters powerful in negotiating contracts that provide for fair wages, affordable and decent health care, improved safety, a grievance procedure, seniority system and more.

"I am thrilled that these new Teamsters are doing everything they can to better their future and workplace by joining the union," said Steve Mack, Teamsters Industrial Trades Division Director.

For more information on the Drive Up Standards campaign, go to www.driveupstandards.org

Strong Contract

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the staging area where the cars are shipped (via carhaul and rail) to dealerships.

"The timing couldn't have been worse for the start of our contract negotiation in January," said John Kobren, who has worked for TLS for more than 23 years. "The financial meltdown had impacted the auto industry more than most other industries, and the company came to the table low-balling us in a dramatic fashion."

Gene Rivera, the business agent for the TLS workers, and Rigo Tirado,

President of Local 495, began the non-economic portion of the negotiations and, according to Kobren, they "immediately established an inclusive environment, encouraging participation from all committee members."

Despite company entrenchment, Local 495 and the Teamsters in the bargaining unit were able to gain increased flexibility in using personal time, guaranteed weekend leave, the establishment of emergency vacation time, plus an addi-

tional vacation day.

Lennox arrived from another negotiation for the beginning of the economic portion. The company had been demanding a wage freeze, reductions in health benefits and a tiered wage structure.

"Bob Lennox effectively countered with a well-informed, persistent and optimistic perspective that ultimately resulted in wage gains, maintenance of full health benefits and a significant bump in pension contributions," Kobren said.