



Motion Picture

The Teamster Motion Picture News

James P. Hoffa, General President • C. Thomas Keegel, General Secretary-Treasurer • Leo T. Reed, Director Motion Picture Division

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 Joe Biden,

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Art Imitates Life

Teamster Leader Plays Himself in "Milk"

Allan Baird has always been a fighter. He made a career in the labor movement with the Teamsters. During what was perhaps the biggest fight of his career, Baird became part of something historic.

He has lived in the Castro District of San Francisco for his entire life. The 77-year-old retired President of Local 921, which merged into Local 853 in 2002, still lives with his wife in one of the best known gay and lesbian communities in the world. It was here that the true story behind the critically acclaimed film "Milk" unfolded. It was a story in which Baird played an integral role, a role that he would portray on the silver screen nearly 32 years after Harvey Milk made history.

In the summer of 1974, Baird had just settled a strike of more than 1,000 beer drivers from Local 888 and all the

beer distributors that serviced San Francisco agreed to a new contract except for Coors. Baird orchestrated a citywide Coors boycott, but the company still refused to bargain.

"William Coors wasn't budging on negotiations," Baird recalled. "We flew to Golden, Colorado at his invitation, sat down at the brewery and stated our case. In the end, it was just a waste of time."

Baird knew that Milk, a camera shop owner on Castro St. who was running for city supervisor, had become a real political force. Baird told Coors that he was going enlist the help of Milk, and after his return from Colorado, Baird sat down with Milk to discuss how they could work together. Baird asked what it would take for Milk to get the gay community to support the boycott of Coors products.

"He told me that we had his support

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A Message From Conference Director Leo T. Reed

One Union – One Standard

In the current economic climate, it is crucial that our union fight to protect



jobs in the motion picture and television production industry. Times are tight for everyone, including the studios

that decide how and where they are going to shoot their next production.

To keep productions in the US, we must take a stand to ensure that vital programs like state film incentive plans are kept in place to encourage production across the country. For example, Local 817 called on New York this past March to tell the governor and state legislature to reinvest in the Empire State Film Production Tax Credit and make the plan permanent.

We cannot allow our elected representatives to fall asleep at the wheel. Call your state representatives to let them know that film and television incentive plans mean more business for the state and more business means more jobs for everyone.

Employee Free Choice Now!

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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.



Empire State Standoff

Local Leaders from Across Country Discuss Division's Future

On March 11, workers and union representatives from Local 817 braved the driving rain and wind to bring a message to the New York State Legislature and Gov. David Patterson: Don't drive movie and TV jobs away from New York.

More than 200 workers from the Teamsters and IATSE arrived in force at the New York State Capitol in Albany aboard 40 vehicles used in the motion picture and television industry, making a circuit around the building before they gathered on the steps. They then staged a rally to call for the permanent renewal of the state's production tax credit package with no caps on job growth.

The Empire State Film Production Tax Credit provides a refundable 30 percent below-the-line tax credit for qualified feature films, episodic television, pilots and television movies and miniseries. It allocated \$65 million in calendar year 2008; \$75 million in 2009; \$85 million in 2010; \$90 million in 2011 and 2012; and \$110 million in 2013.

However, all the funds through 2013 have been claimed and no new funds have been authorized by the state. The effects of this situation are already being felt as television and film projects seek out other locations inside and outside of the country. In what may be a sign of things to come,

as of April, no pilots had been filmed in New York after a record-setting 19 made the state their home last season.

In April, proposed legislation was added to the budget that would extend the program one year with a \$350 million cap for productions. However, Local 817 Secretary-Treasurer, Thomas O'Donnell stressed that studios and production companies may not find this an attractive option for episodic television.

"We are in the process of convincing our state officials that adding an additional year or more to the incentive program will make it a more viable option for production companies," O'Donnell said. "Episodic television programs are less likely to shoot in a state where there is no guarantee that the tax incentive will be there for more than one year."

If the tax credit program is not reinstated, it is estimated that more than 30,000 New Yorkers in the film and television industry will be unemployed.

"If New York State wants to remain competitive with other states and Canada, the program needs to become uncapped and permanent," O'Donnell said. "There is no middle ground. In these tough economic times the production companies need certainty and an assurance that the credit is going to be there as a critical component in the budget."

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and he only had one request; he wanted the Teamsters to hire openly gay drivers in San Francisco," Baird said. "I immediately agreed." With Milk's support, the boycott took hold at gay bars and businesses in San Francisco. The boycott continued for three years and spread across California. And the union kept its word, hiring gay drivers within a week after Baird and Milk made the pact.

Baird and the Teamsters Union supported Milk in his successful run for city supervisor in 1977 when he became the first openly gay man to be elected to public office in Califor-

nia. So when representatives from the film "Milk" contacted Baird and asked him to share his story with the cast, he was happy to agree.

"I was invited to dinner with Sean Penn, James Franco and all the actors working on the film," Baird said. "Director Gus Van Sant decided after meeting me that he wanted me to play myself in the film. He asked me to come back down to the camera shop and play the role. I was thrilled and accepted."

For the complete story, visit <http://TeamsterMagazine.com/art-imitates-life>.

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 the 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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