



*Report from Olympia No. 5*

# Teamsters Local 117

News for DOC Teamsters - 2012 Legislative Session in Olympia



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## Teamsters flex their political muscle in Olympia

### Local 117 Lobby Day draws Teamsters from across the Union



DOC Teamsters meet with the legislators in Olympia.

Members of Teamsters Local 117 from across our Union converged on the State Capitol in Olympia on February 1 to meet with their legislators and discuss critical issues confronting working families. It was the first of three Local 117 Lobby Days, designed to provide members with an opportunity to learn more about the legislative process and to make their voices heard.

"I'm down here to talk about our wages and retirement," said Officer Dacy Coates, a 20-year employee at the Washington Corrections Center. "I shouldn't have to work 2-3 jobs to make ends meet or choose between putting gas in my car or buying groceries."

#### **PASS HB 2346 - OFFICER UNIFORMS!**

Local 117's Terry Hutchins, a nurse at the Monroe Correctional Complex (MCC), came to show her solidarity with co-workers who are fighting to pass HB 2346, legislation that would exempt correctional officers from wearing uniforms made by inmates.

"State Patrol Officers walk around with a lot of pride. Their uniforms say, 'I am a professional.' At DOC, the uniforms are not up to par, and it affects morale tremendously," she said.

Sergeant Michael Boe, also of MCC, said that legislators were generally supportive of the uniform bill. Boe also talked about the need

to pass interest arbitration legislation for correctional employees (ESB 2011). "If we can get one safety bill passed, all of our time spent talking to legislators in Olympia will be worth it," he said.

Azziem Underwood, a longtime Teamster at King County, said he backed the efforts of correctional employees to improve safety and pass interest arbitration. Azziem also stated that he is considering running for political office in coming years.

In total, the group spoke to over a dozen legislators, representing districts across the State. Members said that many lawmakers made firm commitments to support the pro-Teamster bills.

***If you missed out on today's event and would like to participate in the future, contact Political Action Coordinator Lily Wilson-Codega at 206-794-1262 for more information. Local 117 Lobby Days are also scheduled for February 23 and March 27.***

### **TAKE ACTION! Don't let uniform bill die on the vine** HB 2346 faces tough test as Legislators weigh economic impact

After sailing through an initial policy committee last week, a bill that would make inmate-made uniforms a thing of the past for correctional officers is facing a stiff challenge: the bill's projected economic impact.

In the fiscal note attached to the bill, the Office of Financial Management (OFM) estimates that the bill would cost the State over \$890,000 in revenue annually, and that an additional \$311,373 would be needed to purchase uniforms from an outside source.

Even though OFM's numbers are clearly inflated (Blumenthals, for example, testified that it can produce uniforms at a significantly lower cost to the State), the fact remains: Lawmakers, while generally on board policy-wise, are nervous about the bill's projected costs.

Whatever the true economic impact of the bill, we now face a tough task. We must convince Legislators that the need for a change in policy outweighs the purported cost.

Over a dozen DOC Teamsters from Larch, Shelton, Stafford Creek, Walla Walla, Monroe, and Clallam Bay have stepped up over the last two weeks and provided powerful testimony in support of the bill.

Their testimony can be viewed on your Local Union's website at [www.teamsters117.org](http://www.teamsters117.org).

***But they can't do it alone! We need you to contact your Legislators and tell them to pass HB 2346, the officers' uniform bill. Don't wait! Call the legislative hotline in Olympia at 1-800-562-6000 now!***

## CALL NOW!

**1-800-562-6000**



Local 117 Teamsters testify on HB 2346.

***Call the legislative hotline in Olympia at 1-800-562-6000 and tell your legislators to pass HB 2346, the correctional officers' uniform bill. Don't wait!***