



TEAMSTERS LOCAL UNION 117

Affiliated with the International Brotherhood of Teamsters

General Public and Private Sector Employees and Special Services Employees in King and Pierce Counties and Employees of the State of Washington



May 19, 2010

Union Bulletin, Editors
P.O. Box 1358
Walla Walla, WA 99362

Dear Union Bulletin Editors:

It is inaccurate for the Union Bulletin editorial board to suggest that labor unions are not cognizant of the gravity of the State's budget crisis and to imply that they are not looking out for the best interests of State employees (State union leaders can't ignore reality – May 18, 2010).

Teamsters Local 117, the Union that represents 6,000 employees of the State Department of Corrections, defended Corrections' workers and our public safety throughout the recent legislative session. Teamsters Local 117 was effective in staving off an effort by some legislators to shut down two DOC institutions, thus preserving jobs. Local 117 was also instrumental in achieving passage of a bill that protects Corrections' workers by preventing offenders from obtaining personal information and photographs of criminal justice employees through public records requests.

Last year, in addressing the State's budget deficit, Department of Corrections' workers made economic sacrifices by ratifying a contract that included no wage increases over two years. Teamsters Local 117 has demonstrated its willingness to work with the State toward economic stability; we are not, however, willing to sit idly by as the Legislature unilaterally dismantles our criminal justice system, putting our members and our communities at risk in the process.

The Joint Council of Teamsters No. 28 announced early endorsements of a number of legislators who have consistently supported working family issues. Teamsters Local 117 is committed to being fully engaged in all phases of the election process this year in order to protect and enhance the security of all working families in the State of Washington as well as public safety.

Sincerely,

Tracey A. Thompson
Secretary-Treasurer

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