



Teamsters South Sound

Members of Teamsters Local 117



Teamsters Local 117: 14675 Interurban Ave. S, Suite 307 • Tukwila, WA 98168 (206) 441-4860 • www.teamsters117.org

TEAMSTERS FLEX THEIR MUSCLE IN OLYMPIA

Local 117 Lobby Day draws members from across our Union



Members of Teamsters Local 117 at the Capitol.

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 in Shelton. "I shouldn't have to work 2-3 jobs to make ends meet or choose between putting gas in my car or buying groceries."

GOVERNOR PROPOSES REDUCTIONS TO COUNTIES AND CITIES

An issue of particular concern to Local 117 members in the public sector is the Governor's proposal to reduce by 10%

sales tax revenue distributions to two counties and 51 cities, including Pierce County and several municipalities in the South Sound region.

The counties and cities currently receive funds from the State to offset losses resulting from the Streamlined Sales and Use Tax Agreement.

"This is not a time to be forcing our cities and counties to do with less," said Deb Dahlin, a Teamster at Macy's. Deb joined the Local 117 lobby team to talk about ways to increase revenue and save jobs in the public sector.

THE BUDGET CRISIS AND THE NEED FOR REVENUE

The State budget crisis has crippled revenue streams to our municipalities and severely impacted Teamster jobs. Services are being cut, and members in the public sector are facing layoffs.

To address the crisis, Local 117 has teamed up with a coalition of Unions in support of a comprehensive revenue package that includes cutting corporate tax loopholes and forcing the wealthiest 1% to pay their fair share.

"In our lobbying efforts in Olympia, we are fighting to save jobs and maintain services in the counties and cities across our region," said Local 117 Secretary-Treasurer, Tracey A. Thompson.

In total, the Local 117 Lobby Day group spoke to over a dozen legislators,

representing districts across the State. Many lawmakers made firm commitments to support pro-Teamster bills and initiatives.

We need your help in staving off attacks on public employees! If you missed out on the February 1 Lobby Day 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! Oppose HB 2146!

CALL 1-800-562-6000

A bill (HB 2146) currently before the Legislature could reduce revenue distributions to two counties and 51 municipalities, including Pierce County and several municipalities in the South Sound. The loss of revenue would result in budget cuts and the loss of jobs.

Local 117 Lobbyist Teresita Torres has been meeting with legislators on the issue, but she can't do it alone!

Call the legislative hotline in Olympia at 1-800-562-6000 and tell your representatives to oppose reducing the streamline sales tax mitigation - OPPOSE HB 2146!

Tell them to raise revenue by cutting corporate tax loopholes and making the wealthiest 1% to pay their fair share!

LOCAL 117 MEMBERS AT CITY OF KENT GAIN TEAMSTERS PENSION

134-member bargaining unit ratifies 2-year deal



City of Kent Water Department installing 24" butterfly valve on incoming side of their water supply to the valley floor.

Thanks to some creative work at the bargaining table, Teamsters at the City of Kent will have a new benefit to look forward to when they retire - the Teamsters Pension.

City of Kent employees voted to ratify a deal that included the pension in January. The deal also saw improvements to layoff and seniority language and a tightening of the agreement's "Just Cause" provision*.

"I feel like we have a much stronger contract now, even in this tough economy," said Shop Steward Paul Johnson, a 13-year employee who leads a crew of maintenance workers that repairs the city's water mains.

2-1 CREDIT FOR PAST SERVICE

"We pushed hard to get the pension because we knew that it was a great deal, especially with the two for one," he said.

Johnson is referring to an incentive program set up by the Western Conference of Teamsters Pension Trust specifically for new groups. It provides that, for every one year of vesting

service, a member receives two years of past service compliments of the Trust for a maximum of ten years of past service.

In other words, a 10-year employee, after accruing five years of vesting service, will have ten years of past service credit.

The end result is that many long-term employees will triple their benefit over the first five years!

"It's a big deal and a lot of the guys down here are excited about it," Johnson said. "At this point, the employer is only contributing 25 cents per hour, but we've got a good foundation for the future."

PENSION PRESENTATIONS AVAILABLE

If Teamsters at the City of Kent (or other bargaining units) are interested, your Local Union can set up a presentation with a pension representative to answer your questions.

In the meantime, information about the pension is available at your Local Union's website at www.wctpension.org or by talking to your Business Representative.

*For more information about your Union rights under "Just Cause", see the box to the right.

Local 117 Solidarity Scholarship for Continuing Education

For members of Teamsters Local 117 seeking to further their education

LOCAL 117 SOLIDARITY SCHOLARSHIP

ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS:

- Must be an active member of Teamsters Local 117 in good standing.
- Must provide proof of enrollment in an accredited college or university, trade school, technical school, vocational training program, GED prep course, ESOL course, or other recognized educational class or program.

The Teamsters Local 117 Solidarity Scholarship is sponsored by four Local 117 caucuses - Black Teamsters United, Comité Latino, Teamsters for Tomorrow, and the Teamsters Women's Caucus. Scholarship award recipients will be announced at the fall and winter membership meetings. Applications are available online at www.teamsters117.org. If you have questions about the scholarship, talk to your Business Representative or call Teamsters Local 117 at 206-441-4060 or 1-800-872-3450.

Your Local Union is proud to announce a new scholarship opportunity for members - the Local 117 Solidarity Scholarship. The Solidarity Scholarship is designed to support members of Local 117 who are interested in furthering their education. The scholarship is open to:

- Immigrant members seeking to improve their English language proficiency;
- Members seeking to earn their GED;
- Members seeking to gain CDL certification;
- Members seeking to enroll in OSHA training programs;
- Members seeking to enroll in labor education programs;
- Members otherwise seeking to enhance their education.

HOW TO APPLY:

Eligible members must submit an application available online at www.teamsters117.org. Applications are accepted on an ongoing basis. The Local will award a winter and a summer scholarship. The deadline for the winter scholarship is December 1; the deadline for the summer scholarship is August 30. Award recipients are announced at the fall and winter membership meetings.

ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS:

- Applicant must be an active member of Teamsters Local 117 in good standing;
- Applicant must provide proof of enrollment in an accredited college or university, trade school, technical

school, vocational training program, GED prep course, ESOL course, or other recognized educational class or program.

EVALUATION CRITERIA:

Applications are reviewed by a committee comprised of representatives of the four Local 117 caucuses: *Black Teamsters United, Comité Latino, Teamsters for Tomorrow, and the Teamsters Women's Caucus.*

SCHOLARSHIP AWARD AMOUNTS:

The amount of the award will range from \$100 - \$750, depending on the strength of the application and the costs of the program. If you have questions, talk to your Business Representative or visit your Union's website at www.teamsters117.org.



Your Union Rights under Just Cause:

Your Teamsters collective bargaining agreement provides you with the right to fair treatment at work. Without your union contract, you would be employed "at will" which means that the employer could issue discipline or terminate your employment for any non-discriminatory reason.

The "just cause" provision in your contract protects you against unreasonable discipline. The basic elements of just cause have been reduced to seven tests. A "no" answer to one or more of the questions below means that just cause either was not satisfied or at least was seriously weakened.

- 1. NOTICE:** "Did the Employer give to the employee forewarning or foreknowledge of the possible consequences of the employee's disciplinary conduct?"
- 2. REASONABLE RULE OR ORDER:** "Was the Employer's rule or managerial order reasonably related to (a) the orderly, efficient, and safe operation of the Employer's business, and (b) the performance that the Employer might properly expect of the Employee?"
- 3. INVESTIGATION:** "Did the Employer, before administering the discipline to an employee, make an effort to discover whether the employee did in fact violate or disobey a rule or order of management?"
- 4. FAIR INVESTIGATION:** "Was the Employer's investigation conducted fairly and objectively?"
- 5. PROOF:** "At the investigation, did the 'judge' obtain substantial evidence or proof that the employee was guilty as charged?"
- 6. EQUAL TREATMENT:** "Has the Employer applied its rules, orders and penalties even-handedly and without discrimination to all employees?"
- 7. PENALTY:** "Was the degree of discipline administered by the Employer in a particular case reasonably related to (a) the seriousness of the employee's proven offense, and (b) the record of the employee in his service with the Employer?"

If you have questions about the just cause protections under your collective bargaining agreement, talk to your Shop Steward or Business Representative.

COMMUNICATIONS OFFICER UNFAIRLY CRITICIZED IN JOSH POWELL TRAGEDY

Josh Powell alone should be blamed for the murder of his two sons

A Communications Officer at the Law Enforcement Support Agency (LESA) has been attacked in the media for his handling of the 911 call preceding Josh Powell's tragic murder of his two sons.

Criticism of the Officer is unfair and unjustified. In hindsight, it is easy to second guess a 911 interview in the wake of a terrible tragedy; it is quite another thing to be able to predict when a life-threatening emergency might occur.

Communications Officers at LESA take hundreds of calls daily and must rely on often incomplete, disjointed information to distinguish between a real emergency and a non-critical call.

In this terrible case, Josh Powell alone is responsible for the death of his two sons – no one else.

SETTING THE RECORD STRAIGHT

Teamsters Local 117's Tracey A. Thompson has published letters in the Tacoma News Tribune and the Seattle Times to set the record straight.

The letter to the TNT can be read in its entirety here:

Dear Editors:

The Tacoma News Tribune does a grave disservice to all employees of the Law Enforcement Support Agency (LESA) in

suggesting that a Communications Officer inappropriately handled the call that preceded Josh Powell's tragic murder of his two sons (Powell 911 call takers criticized for behavior – 2/8/12). To criticize the Officer's tone as rude, impatient, and abrupt, shows a complete lack of understanding of the job. Communications Officers at LESA are trained professionals who answer hundreds of calls daily and must extract critical details that can be crucial in protecting community members and law enforcement responders.

Over the last three years, Communications Officers at LESA have taken calls involving a number of high-profile tragedies, including the murder of four Lakewood police officers in 2010, the murder of a Deputy and shooting of a Sergeant from the Pierce County Sheriff's Department, and the murder of a Park Ranger in Mt. Rainier National Park on New Year's Day. Without exception, they have performed their duties valiantly, compassionately, with integrity and the utmost professionalism, in highly-stressful emergency situations. Before leveling unwarranted criticism, it is important to understand the true nature of the work and the outstanding service these men and women provide to keep our communities safe.

Sincerely,

*Tracey A. Thompson
Secretary-Treasurer*



TEAMSTERS NON-PARTISAN PAC

Public employees are under attack like never before. Big Business outspends working people by more than 15-1 in Washington D.C. and Olympia to influence legislators and push their anti-worker agenda.

Last year, corporate-backed politicians attacked collective bargaining rights for workers in Wisconsin. Recently, the Indiana State Legislature passed "right to work FOR LESS" legislation that will cripple labor Unions.

Don't think it can't happen here! Every year, legislators right here in Washington State introduce the same anti-Union bills.

As Union members, we often hear that it's "time to fight back," but what concrete steps can we take to protect the rights, wages, and benefits of working people?

FIGHT BACK NOW WITH DRIVE!

You can take a stand for the middle class by contributing to DRIVE – the Teamsters' political action committee. DRIVE funds campaigns to fight for the rights of Union members to bargain together at work for better pay, benefits, and retirement.

DRIVE is non-partisan and independent from any political party.

Stand with your fellow Teamsters. Fight back by participating in DRIVE!

To learn how you can participate in DRIVE, talk to your Business Representative or call your Local Union office at 206-441-4860.

LOCAL 117 EVENTS - MARK YOUR CALENDARS!

February 23, 2012 - Local 117 Lobby Day

March 10, 2012 - Shop Stewards' Seminar and Appreciation Day

March 15, 2012 - General Membership Meeting

FOLLOW YOUR LOCAL UNION ON THE WEB!



Join your Union's Facebook page, follow us on Twitter @teamsters117 and watch Local 117 videos on YouTube!

For more Teamsters news, visit the Local 117 website at www.teamsters117.org. Connect with other Local 117 members on Facebook or follow your Union on Twitter at [@teamsters117](https://twitter.com/teamsters117)!