



## RWDSU: STRONG VALUES, STRONG COMMUNITIES

The Retail, Wholesale and Department Store Union (RWDSU) represents close to 100,000 workers nationally. We represent many essential workers who work in industries such as retail, food service, food processing, building services, warehousing, and car washes. We also represent workers who spend their lives caring for others in nursing homes and non-profit organizations who care for people with disabilities. Our legislative agenda continues our proud record of standing up for our values and delivering for New York workers and their families.

## LEGALIZE CANNABIS, CREATE GOOD, SAFE, UNION JOBS AND ADDRESS RACIAL INEQUITIES IN CANNABIS PROHIBITION

- ✓ Legalizing cannabis and ensuring quality job creation will help to address historical racial inequities, related to criminalization of communities of color and lack of access to good, union jobs for these communities.
- ✓ The enforcement of cannabis prohibition has been used to target and criminalize communities of color in New York State. Legalization should address the discriminatory enforcement of cannabis prohibition statutes and ensure that there is reinvestment in the communities most impacted by the war on drugs.
- ✓ Ensure that workers have access to good, safe jobs by requiring labor peace for all license and permit holders, while also protecting and expanding the medical cannabis program.
- ✓ Generate much-needed revenue for the state and create new economic opportunities to fend off the worst of the current economic downturn.

## PASS THE HEALTHY TERMINALS ACT (BIAGGI S6266D/HYNDMAN A8142D) — PASSED HOUSE AND SENATE; ON GOVERNOR'S DESK

- ✓ Many airport workers do not receive health insurance through their jobs, typically due to the high cost, and instead rely on Medicaid or lack health insurance completely.
- ✓ Four members of Local 1102 who worked at airports have died from COVID-19.
- ✓ This legislation would address the health care crisis at airports by requiring employers at New York airports to compensate workers with a \$4.54/hour benefit supplement that can be used to acquire health insurance.

## REFORM THE PARTIAL UNEMPLOYMENT PENALTY (STIRPE A446/RAMOS S5754)

- ✓ Workers who become unemployed are disincentivized to return to work because of an unusual provision in NYS' unemployment law. Essentially, for each day a person works while receiving unemployment insurance, their weekly benefit is reduced by 25%. This is true even if a worker only works for 1 hour each day. This means that a worker has little incentive to take a part time job while on unemployment.
- ✓ Few other states have a similar system that penalizes workers for taking part time work. It is time NY updates its partial unemployment law.

## **PASS THE NEW YORK HEALTH AND ESSENTIAL RIGHTS ORDER (HERO) ACT**

- ✓ Codify and simplify the Executive Orders and Industry Guidance documents from the Governor related to COVID-19 and infectious disease.
- ✓ Create a single baseline for all worker and customer health and safety for all industries that is easy to understand and follow.
- ✓ Establish health and safety committees and sector-based infectious disease boards to further protect workers and the public.

## **PASS THE MARK TO MARKET BILLIONAIRE WEALTH TAX/WORKER BAILOUT ACT (DE LA ROSA A10414/RAMOS S8277)**

- ✓ Establishes a billionaire mark-to-market tax that taxes residents with \$1 billion dollars or more in net assets. A mark-to-market tax simply taxes income based on the full value of capital gains accrued in the year they accrue. It eliminates the deferral option under current capital gains tax law.
- ✓ The revenue from this tax would be directed into a worker bailout fund. This fund would provide financial support for workers who have been excluded from accessing programs like unemployment insurance.
- ✓ It is estimated this new tax would raise \$3.5 billion.

## **REFORM THE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT SYSTEM TO STRENGTHEN COMMUNITIES AND CREATE GOOD JOBS**

- ✓ The state gives away billions of dollars each year to businesses in the form of tax breaks and incentives with few standards to ensure communities are strengthened and workers are protected.
- ✓ Require labor peace for all retail and e-commerce projects that receive financial support from the state. Labor peace is cost neutral, as it simply says that employers must refrain from anti-union activities (this actually saves businesses money), while unions must refrain from strikes and other labor disruptions.
- ✓ Protect communities and workers by requiring a thorough environmental and community impact assessment that goes well beyond the current SEQRA standard.

## **SAFE STAFFING FOR QUALITY CARE ACT (RIVERA S1032/GOTTFRIED A2954)**

- ✓ This bill will improve patient and worker safety by establishing staff-to-patient ratios for nurses in hospitals, nursing homes and other health care facilities based on the type of care provided and number of patients.
- ✓ Data continues to prove that staffing ratios not only save lives but provide significant cost offsets for providers. This legislation will implement mandated ratios, with cost offsets, so that patients get the care they deserve.

## **EXPAND ACCESS TO CHILD CARE**

- ✓ Expand child care programs and subsidies so working families have access to affordable, quality family care. This includes funding and access to child care facilitated enrollment.

***For more information please contact the RWDSU Political Department  
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