

TEAMSTERS LOCAL 117



SPRING 2019

THE GUARDIAN

News from the hardworking Teamsters of DOC



TEAMSTERS 117
WE DECIDE HOW STRONG OUR UNION WILL BE
JOHN SCEARCY, Secretary-Treasurer

Our union's legislative priorities for 2019

INTEREST ARBITRATION

DOC BILLS CLEAR FIRST HURDLE IN OLYMPIA



A MESSAGE FROM

MICHELLE WOODROW

PRESIDENT & DIRECTOR OF CORRECTIONS & LAW ENFORCEMENT



Essential Rights for DOC

ALL HANDS ON DECK REQUIRED TO PASS INTEREST ARBITRATION

Our goals as a Union for the 2019 legislative session are as ambitious as they are necessary.

We need to get our DOC contract funded so that the wage increases in our interest arbitration award can take effect. We'll be working to amend the law to authorize trained corrections staff to carry a concealed weapon without a permit as other law enforcement professionals are entitled to do. But certainly the biggest lift this session will be passing a bill that secures our right to interest arbitration.

If you've been around the Department for a while, you know our Union has been pursuing this goal for some time. We started back in 2010, running a bill that eventually stalled out due to intense political opposition.

After years of raising

our voice in Olympia, we achieved a breakthrough in 2014 when the Governor signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) granting interest arbitration rights to DOC. In 2016, we successfully negotiated these rights into our contract.

Interest arbitration has been a critical tool for us. The process has helped secure significant wage increases for DOC Teamsters over the last three contract cycles. While we've seen progress, it's important to remember that we do not have access to interest arbitration under state law as other agencies like the Washington State Patrol do.

WHY IS THIS IMPORTANT?

Having interest arbitration codified in statute ensures that these rights cannot be easily stripped away by an incoming governor with a different agenda.

WHAT IS INTEREST ARBITRATION?

For those of us less familiar with the power of interest arbitration, let me explain. Interest arbitration allows our union to take mandatory subjects of bargaining like wages before a neutral third-party arbitrator should we reach impasse with the State during contract negotiations. The arbitrator's job is to look at objective evidence - comparable conditions or compensation in other states, for example - then render an impartial decision. While we don't get everything we want through the process, we've been fortunate over the last six years to have argued our case before experienced arbitrators who have issued reasonable awards that have positively impacted Teamsters at the DOC.

Passing interest arbitration into law for corrections will

be a mighty lift. Legislators will be leery of its cost and indeterminate fiscal note. To succeed, all of us will need to come together with one voice to pressure our legislators to do the right thing for DOC.

Throughout session, we will be calling on you to take action and reach out to your legislators. Be sure to respond to these alerts. Our safety and our future depend on it.

Respectfully,

Michelle Woodrow
*President and Director
of Corrections & Law
Enforcement*



With the 2019 legislative session in Olympia well underway, bills that would grant interest arbitration rights to our Department of Corrections and University of Washington Police Department (UWPD) members have started to move.

On January 17, Teamsters from both groups, along with Michelle Woodrow, our Union's Director of Corrections & Law

to obtain critical safety gear to protect themselves in the line of duty. For Sergeant Jason Heuer and Officer James Deuel of the DOC, passing interest arbitration means securing their rights into the future:

"It's critical that we win this in statute because otherwise it can just be taken away..." they testified.

CLEARING AN IMPORTANT HURDLE

Our members' testimony helped the bills clear an important, first hurdle. Both the Senate and House committees have voted to pass the bills out of committee. Since the bills would have an impact on the State budget, they will now head to their respective fiscal committees (Senate Ways and Means/House Appropriations) for more hearings and more opportunities for us to testify.

We will keep you updated as soon as those hearings have been scheduled.

It's critical that we win this in statute because otherwise it can just be taken away.

- SERGEANT JASON HEUER, OFFICER JAMES DEUEL

Enforcement, provided powerful testimony supporting the proposals in hearings before the Senate Labor and Commerce Committee and the House Labor and Workplace Standards Committee.

Woodrow laid out our case for interest arbitration before legislators:

"DOC and law enforcement employees perform one of the most stressful, dangerous jobs in the United States... Interest arbitration will ensure these employees are treated with the same respect as other public safety professionals by ensuring a level playing field in negotiations..." she said.

PROTECTION FOR THE FUTURE

Without access to interest arbitration, Teamsters at the UWPD like Officers Mark Hackett and Marvin McKinney have struggled

CONCEALED CARRY BILL - HB1042

We've also seen progress on another important piece of our legislative agenda: a bill that will amend statute to authorize trained DOC staff to carry a concealed weapon. This bill will restore a right that was taken away due to a problem with the RCW that invalidated our Peace Officer Identification Cards. The new bill has bipartisan support with twenty co-sponsors and will be considered by the House Civil Rights and Judiciary Committee.

For the latest on our interest arbitration bills (HB1042/SB5021) and our concealed carry bill (HB1589) visit www.Teamsters117.org. You can also track the bills on the legislature's website at www.leg.wa.gov.

OUR GOALS IN OLYMPIA



Over the last few years, Teamsters 117 has built a strong voice in Olympia. Participation at our annual lobby day has grown from a few dozen a decade ago to over 200 members and their families at last year's event. With a stronger voice, we've been able to achieve legislative change that has benefited workers across our state. We've funded our DOC contracts and passed bills that have made our workplaces safer and more secure.

Our collective power is a direct result of member involvement, and in 2019 there will be plenty of opportunities to get involved.

Our Legislative Director, Brenda Wiest, will be on the ground throughout session meeting with legislators and our labor partners to advocate on behalf of members of Teamsters 117. Dustin Lambro, our union's Political Director, will be mobilizing members to testify before legislative committees and coordinating lobby visits so that members can take their concerns directly to legislators.

Dustin is also the point person for our Legislative Reception & Lobby Day on February 26-27 when members will participate in dozens of meetings with state lawmakers. (If you have registered for Lobby Day, you will be receiving a packet of materials in the mail prior to the event.)

Our Union's priorities for the 2019 legislative session are as follows:

- **Interest Arbitration Rights for DOC** – Interest arbitration gives our union the ability to move mandatory subjects of bargaining to a neutral third-party arbitrator should we reach impasse in negotiations with the State. It is a right commonly granted public safety personnel who do

not have the ability to strike, such as the Washington State Patrol. We achieved interest arbitration through a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) signed by the Governor in 2014 and negotiated it into our 2017-2019 and 2019-2021 contracts. It is time to codify this right in statute.

- **Fund our DOC and UW Police Contracts** – We will be working in a coalition of state employee unions to ensure that legislators recognize our public servants by funding state employee contracts.
- **Interest Arbitration Rights for Campus Police** – Campus police in our state, including members of Teamsters 117 working at the University of Washington Police Department, should have access to interest arbitration rights just as other commissioned law enforcement officers do.
- **Preserve Concealed Carry for Trained Corrections Staff** – Amend state law to extend the right for trained correctional personnel who have been subject to a background check in the last five years to carry a concealed weapon without a permit as other law enforcement personnel are able to do. This fix will restore a right that was taken away due to a problem with the RCW that invalidated our Peace Officer Identification Cards.

To achieve our goals in Olympia, all of us will need to get involved. Check in at www.Teamsters117.org for action alerts and updates on the progress of bills that impact you and your co-workers. If you have questions, talk to your Union Representative or contact Political Director Dustin Lambro at 206-441-4860 x1262.



Teamsters Holiday Meetings, 2018





Teamsters Holiday Meetings, 2018





Officer Richard Coleman (center) advocating for interest arbitration at the Teamsters 117 Day of Action in 2012.

WAGE INCREASES HAVE ACCELERATED RETIREMENT FOR OFFICER RICHARD COLEMAN

Richard Coleman has his sights set on travel. The longtime Walla Walla resident has imagined destinations closer to home and others further afield: from the Oregon Coast to the beaches of Belize, from the Civil War battlefields of

and state pension benefits swell.

"Interest arbitration has been phenomenal in helping to raise our pay," he said. "Without this level of income, I'd have to be working a couple years more. Now I have a good, solid

where DOC houses some of its most challenging offenders.

Erratic bursts of violence – brawls in the dayroom and assaults on staff – still occur, Coleman says, but less frequently than in the early days of his career. "It's still a prison of course," he says. "But overall it's a significantly better place to work now than in my first 15 years here."

Through the grind and often thankless tribulations of prison work, Coleman has not only endured but thrived as a respected officer and a leader of his peers. His leadership has come through experience, so essential to the job, but also from his involvement in the union. From early on, Coleman has been an activist, sticking up for the rights of his co-workers.

Now, with the ability to live comfortably on a fixed income, Coleman and his wife, who will also retire from state service next year, will have the time and the means to travel the world.

Happy trails, Richard! Congratulations on an outstanding Teamsters career and thank you for your service.

Without this level of income, I'd have to be working a couple years more. Now I have a good, solid retirement base.

- OFFICER RICHARD COLEMAN, WSP

Virginia to the Baltic states in Eastern Europe. After 36 years of public service, trips once unfathomable are about to become a reality.

With retirement just a hair's breadth away, he credits his union for allowing him to bow out earlier than he'd imagined. Thanks to hard-fought wage increases over the last three contract cycles achieved through interest arbitration, he's seen his social security

retirement base."

For Coleman, retirement from the Department of Corrections comes in February, the 28th of the month to be precise - not that anyone's counting.

The last decade he's spent patrolling the tiers of Echo Unit, inmate living quarters in the west complex of the Washington State Penitentiary. Before that, he held down a post in the Intensive Management Unit,



Brenda Wiest

BRENDA WIEST NAMED VICE-PRESIDENT OF OUR UNION'S EXECUTIVE BOARD

through her work with lawmakers and our labor allies to craft and move policy that benefits workers across Washington State.

Prior to stepping into that role, Brenda led organizing drives,

labor representative on the Labor and Industries Workers' Compensation Advisory Committee and a participant on the Union Labels and Lists Committee.

She was appointed as a citizen and

The Teamsters 117 Executive Board has unanimously voted to appoint Brenda Wiest as its new Vice-President. Brenda will succeed former Vice-President and Union Representative Marcus Williams, who announced he is planning for a possible relocation at the end of the year.

"I love this union and I am humbled and honored to have been asked to serve on our Executive Board," Wiest said. "I am committed to building power and unity among all of our members through strong contracts, growth, community involvement, and legislative change."

Brenda, who has been on the Local 117 staff for 15 years, will continue to serve as our union's Legislative Director. She has excelled in that role

contract campaigns, and strikes to build member power and win strong contracts at places like UNFI, Waste Management, and Davis Wire.

Brenda is active in the labor movement and her community. She has been a delegate on the Pierce County Central Labor Council (PCCLC) for the last 12 years and has served on the PCCLC Executive Board for the last six. She is also a

labor voice to the Tacoma 2025 Advisory Committee to build a strategic plan to guide the City of Tacoma for the next 10 years.

"Brenda is an extremely talented, committed, and experienced labor leader. We are thrilled to welcome her to our union's Executive Board," said John Searcy, Secretary-Treasurer of Teamsters 117.

I love this union and I am humbled and honored to have been asked to serve on our Executive Board.

- BRENDA WIEST, TEAMSTERS 117 LEGISLATIVE DIRECTOR



Teamsters Leadership Academy graduates, 2018

TEAMSTERS LEADERSHIP TRAINING COMING TO THE EASTSIDE

Our first Teamsters Leadership Academy training for 2019 will take place on the east side. The training will cover topics like labor history, organizing, building union power, contract enforcement, and more.

This program is part of our union's strategic priority to invest in member leadership and development.

For dates, location or more info., please contact Karen Estevenin at 206-441-4860 x1244.

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UPCOMING EVENTS

FEB 26-27 - Teamsters 117 Lobby Day, Olympia

MARCH 8-9 - Shop Stewards Seminar, Tukwila & Seattle

MARCH 21 - General Membership Meeting, Tukwila

TEAMSTERS LOCAL 117
Secretary-Treasurer: John Searcy
President: Michelle Woodrow

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