



**STATE EMPLOYEES
TRADES COUNCIL UNITED**
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May 29, 2018

To: SETC-United/Teamsters 2010 Skilled Trades Members

From: SETC-United/Teamsters 2010 Skilled Trades Board Members

RE: Business Manager/Director Skilled Trades

Hello Brothers and Sisters:

Over the last week Teamsters staff, organizers, activists, and Mr. Rabinowitz have been visiting campuses to discuss organizational changes. There have been numerous reasons or an unusual lack of explanation surrounding the changes and the decisions that were made. We have fielded many calls from members with questions surrounding the changes that are happening to our division. We have decided to issue this statement for the members to understand the circumstances which affect you as a SETC/Teamster 2010 Skilled Trades Division member.

SETC-United members have been through a lot over the last decade. The incoming board in 2016 was focused on bringing communication, transparency, and unity to a group that faced division. We focused our efforts on campus visits, building a stewards network, and creating an inclusive environment. During this time we explored options to help address the growing concern for resources needed to operate SETC-United. This brought forth the option to affiliate with a larger union to increase the resources for our members. The message to members was simple, and consisted of the following key points:

- 1- Keep SETC-United structure and autonomy under a skilled trades division in Teamsters 2010.
- 2- Add three full-time representatives to represent skilled trades members.
- 3- Keep a skilled trades fund to benefit members of skilled trades division.
- 4- Be able to use all resources available from Teamsters 2010 (i.e. attorneys, researchers, etc..).
- 5- All SETC-United members would be Teamsters and have all benefits offered by Teamsters.

Over the last nine months your SETC-United Board has been hard at work with multiple tasks related to the members and the affiliation. Our member driven bargaining team worked with Teamsters' resources to create a strategic plan for our wage reopener. We worked with the stewards to ensure updates were released as sessions ended. Board members were out on campuses to get flyers and shirts distributed for campus actions. And in the end we TA'd a contract extension which the members voted to ratify with significant gains to lead into the next contract.

During this time we also were busy trying to work on finalizing the affiliation agreement details. Working with Mr. Rabinowitz, we focused on making sure the division was staffed with representatives who understood skilled trades. We wanted to ensure the division was properly funded to bring much needed resources to Skilled Trades. Looking to offer much needed training, apprenticeships, and scholarships to name a few. We wanted to ensure a board presence on the campuses to keep the same structure which had been practiced by SETC-United. In short, we have been hard at work with Teamsters to work out the evolving relationship under this affiliation.

We have heard many stories around the campus tours and phone calls which have been strategically planned by Mr. Rabinowitz. He has remained vague and ambiguous surrounding the facts of what led to these changes. There has been rumors that our Business Manager (Director) failed to comply with the Teamsters' way and that he was not performing to standards expected by the members. Mr. Rabinowitz will tell you that this decision was made with a heavy heart and after many months of consideration. He will state this decision was made with the input and backing of the Skilled Trades Board and 2010 E-Board. Lastly, he will tell you how he is tasked with making sure the business of Teamsters 2010 rest solely on his shoulders.

Our Business Manager (Director) is tasked with oversight of the Skilled Trades Division, as per the affiliation agreement, with the backing of the Board. He has been hard at work with Mr. Rabinowitz to complete the agreement and transition into the role of Director. UCSD and UCLA were campuses which would join under the Skilled Trades Division and oversight of the Director and Board. Our Director was focused on bringing together the Skilled Trades members, as there were signs and feedback that UCLA was not happy with the affiliation. This was witnessed by our Board members during a visit to UCLA soon after the affiliation. The Director was working with leaders and newly appointed Board Members to create a better relationship with UCLA and UCSD. This was done by making campus visits and meeting members one on one to explain the intent of the Division. When visiting UCLA Mr. Rabinowitz was very concerned with our Director going to the campus and meeting with the members.

The culmination of these events was when he told our Director he was not to visit UCLA without his permission. Our Director found this concerning as oversight should include the Skilled Trades Director and the Board to meet and visit members in Skilled Trades and this request only applied to one campus in Skilled Trades. The specific accusations were that our Director visited UCLA on May 10 and was undermining Teamsters to the members. Mr. Rabinowitz will not bring forth the members or provide statements to the accusations. He will state that our Director failed to ask for permission to visit the campus and “disobeyed” his direct order, and for this reason he can no longer trust our Director to be in the field. He states that our Director planned a secret meeting with UCLA, however, the Director paid for lunch on the Union credit card during this visit. Our Director intended on notifying Mr. Rabinowitz on May 14 upon his return to work.

Mr. Rabinowitz phoned our Director on the morning of May 14 and asked about the visit to UCLA. He asked why he visited the campus and if he was there talking to the members about decertifying the union. Our Director stated no such conversation had occurred during his visit to which Mr. Doan, a UCLA Board Member, could verify as he was present the entire visit. They agreed to continue the conversation during an upcoming Teamsters conference, in a face to face meeting, as it would be more appropriate. Mr. Rabinowitz chose to address the awaited conversation on the last day of the conference, May 17, at which time he notified our Director he was being sent back to work. He followed-up his decision by hosting an all Teamsters resource reach out to notify the members of the change in representation.

On May 18 Mr. Rabinowitz called for an emergency Board meeting to vote on his action to end our Director’s release time. Prior to the meeting, Mr. Rabinowitz contacted each Board member to sell them on his story of the mistrust and disobedience presented by our Director. During each call he stated to all the Board Members “Can I count on your support to follow through on my request.” It has been stated by Mr. Rabinowitz that there was an overwhelming support by the Boards however the facts states otherwise. If we consider to exclude the four hand-picked Board Members selected by Mr. Rabinowitz to the Skilled Trades Division, the vote ultimately ended in a 4-4 with one abstained. The 4-4 decision when considered, addresses the fact that other Board Members felt they were forced to vote “YES” in support of Mr. Rabinowitz. This decision was then overwhelmingly passed by the 2010 E-Board, which consist of seven members who are employed by 2010. These boards members are not on release time nor do they have retreat rights to a campus, therefore they are solely dependent upon Mr. Rabinowitz in securing their jobs. This clearly poses as a conflict for there is a bias in having board members whose jobs depend on supporting Mr. Rabinowitz. Finally, Mr. Rabinowitz chose to host a stewards call on May 24 to explain the upcoming events and matters concerning our Director, and yet he

failed to notify the Board and the Director of the meeting and eliminated any involvement by your elected Skilled Trades board members.

In the end, the decision is up to the members. Mr. Rabinowitz had not discuss any matters or concerns regarding our Director prior to May 17. This is concerning, considering we had recently discussed concerns related to the affiliation agreement during the April 27 Skilled Trades board meeting. During this meeting, we did address a key oversight made by Mr. Rabinowitz as to his failure in establishing the Skilled Trades account. This was addressed after being informed that Mr. Rabinowitz had instructed our Treasurer, Drew Scott, to accompany him on April 18 to the bank to withdraw approximately over \$790k out of the SETC account. The fears of many members that we would lose our power as an independent seem to now be a reality. Mr. Rabinowitz is clearly showing that the agreement in place can be over thrown if he chooses, since he is the Principal Officer. As Teamsters has taught us and stated, “no one can stop us from standing together for our rights.” As Teamsters, this is now our time to stand up and demand 2010 respect and comply with the affiliation agreement they offered SETC-United.

In Solidarity,

Frank Garcia, President

Ron Williams, Recording Secretary

Chris Sprofera, Board Member

Doug Frame, Board Member