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## Hoffa wins Teamsters election

**William B. Cassidy, Senior Editor** (</users/william-b-cassidy>) | Nov 21, 2016 9:54AM EST

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James P. Hoffa, leader of the International Brotherhood of Teamsters for 18 years, won another five-year term as general president of the union this week, defeating rival Teamsters United leader Fred Zuckerman by about 6,600 votes after a recount of challenged ballots.

Employers that have dealt with Hoffa in contract negotiations, especially during and since the recession, are likely relieved. The Teamsters negotiated several deals involving wage and benefit concessions credited with keeping YRC Worldwide, in particular, alive.

"The winning margin for all offices now exceeds the number of challenged ballots remaining," the independent Office of the Election Supervisor [said on its website \(https://www.ibvote.org/\)](https://www.ibvote.org/). More than 12,000 ballots were challenged after the official vote count ended Thursday, with less than 4,000 remaining.

The still uncertified tally has Hoffa winning by 6,162 votes, capturing 51.5 percent of the total 198,778 ballots counted for general president. That's slightly more than number of votes reported for the 75-year-old labor leader before the challenged ballots were counted.

The election results have not yet been certified by the independent supervisor, and neither Hoffa nor Zuckerman has released a final statement on the vote tally.

Contact negotiations with employers, as well as concerns about pensions, likely hurt Hoffa in this election. Fred Zuckerman, president of Local 89 in Louisville, Kentucky, came closer to unseating Hoffa than any other rival since 2001, Hoffa's first stab at re-election after winning the Teamsters presidency in 1998. Hoffa captured 60 percent or more of the vote in three elections since 2001.

The election results underscore discontent over contract concessions negotiated by the Hoffa with companies such as YRC Worldwide and ArcBest. Those contracts included wage and benefit cuts that helped the struggling trucking companies get through the recession.

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Members of the Teamsters Carhaul division, once led by Zuckerman, have rejected two proposed five-year national contracts since their last agreement expired in 2015.

The Hoffa-led Teamsters will have to come up with a new carhaul deal, and renegotiate many of the contracts criticized by Zuckerman and his allies, including the Teamsters for a Democratic Union, over the next five years. The current agreement with UPS expires in 2018.

The election, as close as it was, involved only a small portion of the union's 1.4 million members. About 15.4 percent of the membership, slightly more than 210,000 Teamsters, cast ballots in the vote. That's a similar participation rate to preceding union elections.

For the first time, the Teamsters' General Executive Board will include vice presidents from an opposing slate. Six regional vice presidents from Zuckerman's Teamsters United slate were elected. They will join 17 at-large and regional vice presidents from the Hoffa slate.

The question now shifts to who eventually will succeed the 75-year-old Teamster leader when, or if, he decides to retire. His new five-year term expires in 2021.

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