



Crew and Medical Transporters United
USW Crew/Medical Drivers Project
60 Boulevard of the Allies - 9th Floor - Pittsburgh, PA 15222
Hotline: 866-203-4960 * Fax: 412-562-2555 * Email: 1222@usw.org

Union Update for Rail Crew and Medical Drivers

May 25, 2018

A lot has been going on union-wise since our last Update. Here is a summary of activity:

UPSEU-USW/PTI Federal Lawsuit over 2016 Wages: As of today, our union attorneys and the company will have filed the final briefs (position papers and responses on the issues) with the Federal Judge. We're told the earliest we might see a court response is mid-July.

UPSEU-USW/PTI Contract Negotiations: The Union and Company have held two more negotiations sessions on non-economic issues. One in Indianapolis and one in Pittsburgh. We are slowly moving through the 103 union proposals and the 19 proposals the Company put forward. Our next negotiations session is on May 30 and 31 in Gary, Indiana.

UPSEU-USW/PTI Contract Extension: Due to the volume of negotiations work to be done, and the pace we are moving through the various proposals, the Union and Company have agreed to extend the current Contract through July 13, 2018. This leaves all provisions of the current agreement in place while we continue to resolve issues. After the non-economic issues and the unresolved grievance cases have been dealt with, we will discuss the economic (money) issues.

Frustration: We know the ongoing federal lawsuit and these extended negotiations are frustrating for our members and drivers. Your union representatives and negotiators have those same frustrations. We all have a choice. We can take our frustration out on the union and show the company that we are fractured, OR we can understand that this kind of fight requires support, strategy, and patience. Want to influence the company to come to a fair resolution? Show you're solidly behind the Union. You can work with your Stewards to convince non-members in your location to become members. This isn't a spectator sport and we aren't in the bleachers. We all have a role to play here and we all need to recognize that the company will judge its actions on our solidarity.

Renzenberger/Hallcon BNSF Locations: The BNSF Railroad awarded bids at 15 PTI locations in Washington and Oregon from PTI to Renzenberger/Hallcon late last year. We have reached an agreement regarding these locations with the Company. That agreement will now go out to drivers who are union members, for approval. Where these locations

have signed enough union cards to be certified as union locations, and have ratified the agreement, they will enjoy the provisions of the current Renzenberger/Hallcon Contract.

RailCrew Express Negotiations at Kendleton, TX: We have been trying to finish up a contract for the drivers at RCX's Kendleton Operations. We made a proposal several months ago. However, due to the company chief negotiators health issues and his schedule, we have been delayed in getting this resolved. We have scheduled a discussion next week that will hopefully get our members there a contract.

Union Rail Driver Alliance: The Alliance between UPSEU, USW, UE and SMART unions has been working to bring the collective power of all the rail crew drivers these four unions have to help improve industry standards for workers. We are sharing collective bargaining information, organizing data, have held some joint driver meetings and are working toward discussions with the major crew hauling companies about common concerns. We know that ultimately the Railroads need to provide the resources that will allow these jobs to be paid properly. Building power in this way opens up new opportunities for a better future for rail crew hauling drivers.

Being Union is More Important Than Ever: The United States Supreme Court ruled on Monday, May 21, 2018 in a case called, *Epic Systems Corp. v. Lewis* that non-union employers can require employees to sign away their rights to a class action suit, if the employer violates the law. In its place would be a private arbitration system provided by the company. This includes civil rights, wage theft, and other legal protections. The ruling is seen as destroying a long held worker right to join with other workers in class actions against illegal acts of their employer. Most labor observers also feel very few employees would challenge their companies as individuals in the arbitration process. However, if you belong to a union, you still have a federally protected right to concerted activity. Without a union, your options have now been severely limited.

Everybody is an Organizer: With thousands of drivers spread across hundreds of locations, it's impossible for Stewards alone to help drivers understand the value of sticking together and having a contract. When you see a new driver, or find out someone is an established driver but has yet to join the union, see what you can do. Better yet, form a solidarity committee with your Steward. They get updates on membership monthly. Together we are stronger and you can help.

Getting Help: Your Location Steward should be the first stop in trying to get your union contract questions answered or if you have a problem. However, we understand that it's sometimes hard to reach a Steward. The next and quickest way to get some help is:

The Union Driver Hotline at (866) 203-4960.

Email us at: 1222@usw.org.

Union Area Representative Contact Information: Here are the contact numbers for our four Union Area Representatives:

Northeast States: Jeff Kramer – Phone: (317) 691-7690

Email: jkramer@organizing.usw.org

(Connecticut, Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Maine, Massachusetts, Michigan, Minnesota, New Hampshire, New York, Ohio, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island)

Southeast States: Darryl Turner – Phone: (205) 253-3016

Email: dturner@organizing.usw.org

(Alabama, Delaware, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Louisiana, Maryland, Mississippi, Missouri, New Jersey, North Carolina, South Carolina, Tennessee)

Western States: Vicki Fuston – Phone: (509) 205-9608

Email: vickifuston@gmail.com

(Arizona, California, Colorado, Idaho, Kansas, Montana, Nebraska, Nevada, New Mexico, North Dakota, Oregon, South Dakota, Utah)

Southwestern States: Jackie Bell – Phone: (817) 343-8862

Email: jbelle@organizing.usw.org

(Arkansas, Louisiana, Oklahoma, Texas)

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CONTACT US

Union Driver Hotline - 1-866-203-4960 –

Fax: 1-412-562-2318 —