New Strike Fund Will Enhance Contract Negotiations

Special Convention Delegates Approve Dues Increase To Build IBT Strike Fund

Democratically-elected delegates to the IBT’s Special Convention held April 30th in Las Vegas, Nevada took an important step forward in enhancing the IBT’s strength and clout as a leader for workers in the modern workplace.

After serious discussion and debate about the current state of the IBT’s finances, the delegates overwhelmingly approved a new funding plan that will raise dues an average of 5¢/hour. This plan will boost the union’s security, enhance strike benefits for members, and expand organizing activities, while guaranteeing that the IBT’s remains a leader in the 21st Century.

IBT Delegates Vote YES To Strengthen Teamster Power

Special Convention delegates approved the recommendations of the IBT’s Blue Ribbon Commission on Teamster Finances by a wide-margin. A final vote showed that more than 98% of the 1,748 delegates to the convention voted YES to build Teamster power.

“We will show employers that we mean business,” IBT General President Jim Hoffa told delegates. “Our members will have a union that will be there during a strike. That will build its ranks. That will be financially stable and secure for many years.”

Hoffa said that while nobody wants to raise dues, rank-and-file members have no choice if they want a Union with the

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A Dues Increase Needed To Build Strong Strike Fund

By President Brian Meidel

Teamster delegates from around the country who met in Las Vegas, Nevada on April 30th came together with one goal in mind: building Teamster financial power. Recognizing the challenges facing our union in the coming months and years, delegates overwhelmingly approved a new financial proposal that will raise dues slightly to build a much-needed strike fund.

Local 734's delegates proudly joined this Special Convention to do our part to help build a 21st century union. We were actively engaged in the many discussions about how best to give members real and meaningful strike benefits. Our delegation was a supporter of the proposals outlined by the IBT Blue Ribbon Commission (BRC) as an important step in getting the IBT's finances in order and securing the resources we need to fight, and win, for rank-and-file Teamsters.

Teamsters Build A Strike Fund For Today and Tomorrow

The bottom line is that for far too long, Teamsters have been without a meaningful strike fund. Because of this fact, employers facing across from us at the bargaining table have stalled, delayed and played hardball — knowing that we would be less likely to walk out without the backing of a strong strike fund. Now, thanks to the overwhelming vote of the delegation, the Teamsters will have a strike fund. This will bolster our efforts at the bargaining table, and give us one more tool to use in the fight for workplace justice.

The convention's theme "A Nickel An Hour For Teamster Power" was more than just a slogan. This plan, as proposed by the IBT's Blue Ribbon Commission on Teamster Finances, is a workable solution to keep the International Union on a positive path into the future. It is a plan that is dedicated to improving their quality of life for all Teamsters.

A Positive Change For All Rank-and-File Members

What does this mean for us? Well, for Local 734, it means that when we begin contract negotiations this year on a new Bread and Cake Sales Agreement, employers will now face the reality of a possible strike. This will change the political dynamics of negotiations. Employers will now be less inclined to drag their feet if they know we will call a strike. It also means we will be better prepared to negotiate a contract that will address the needs of rank-and-file members. This will be a positive change that will impact the lives of all Teamsters.

This plan also means that every Local 734 member will now receive strike benefits that are **ten times their hourly wage**. So in other words, if you make $10/hour, you will receive $100/week in strike pay; if you make $15/hour you will receive $150/week in strike pay; if you earn $20/hour, you will receive $200/week in strike pay, and so on.

This is a positive plan that was approved by nearly all delegates to the Special Convention. However, not everyone agreed. The narrow-minded TDU minority who fought to kill this plan were fighting against the best interests of all Teamsters. They were putting politics ahead of you and your family.

Thankfully, when all was said and done, TDU lost — and Teamsters men and women around the country won. Now, thanks to the efforts of REAL Teamsters, we will have greater power and influence to continue building a brighter future for all working men and women.

TDU Fights Against A Strong Strike Fund

Although the Blue Ribbon Commission proposal was a positive step for our union, sadly, not everyone supports a strong Teamsters Union. The most vocal opponents of the Commission's plan are members of TDU.

Despite all their talk about fighting for members, these people have been going around criticizing the Blue Ribbon Commission and urging delegates to vote against their recommendations. TDU obviously doesn't want anything positive done about the IBT's finances. These chronic complainers obviously favor a weak, divided, ineffective and impotent union, instead of a Union with the resources and strength to effectively fight to protect the interests of rank-and-file members.

What TDU won't tell you is that the same people who aggressively opposed the Commission's plan, supported a higher dues hike in 1994. In fact, eight years ago TDU passed a resolution urging members to VOTE YES on a dues increase. However, TDU is now against a smaller dues hike to create a strong strike fund. If you ask me, TDU members are, once again, showing their true colors.

Despite the criticism from TDU, real, hard-working, dues paying and loyal Teamsters know what must be done to build Teamster power and create a strong strike fund. Passage of the Blue Ribbon Commission proposal was the first step toward a strong Teamsters Union for the 21st century.

Going forward, Local 734 will continue doing what we can to enhance the strength of our International Union. As for TDU, if history is any guide (and I believe it is), these people will keep doing what they do best: Tearing Down our Union.
Welcome New Members!

Wail Alhmedi, Interstate Brands
Fadi Al-Nadi, Interstate Brands
Robert Benjamin, Interstate Brands
Wilford Davis, Interstate Brands
Bruce Dulany, Geroge Weston
Javier Flores, Interstate Brands
John Furlong, Sara Lee
Randy Gervigis, Interstate Brands
Rickey Hawkins, Interstate Brands
James Heffelfinger, Interstate Brands
Melvin Hudson, Alpha Baking
Jerry Jackson, Interstate Brands
Melvin Hudson, Alpha Baking
Jerry Jackson, Interstate Brands
Michael James, Olympic Freightways
John Jones, Interstate Brands
Brian Kosinski, Sara Lee
Travis McClain, Sara Lee
Jeffrey Mikels, Geroge Weston
Bryan Montes, Interstate Brands
David Newman, Sara Lee
Ronald Pasowicz, Olympic Freightways
Thomas Pater, Alpha Baking
Eddie Payne, Geroge Weston
Bart Pituch, Sara Lee
Robert Pyzik, Geroge Weston
Miguel Quendo, Geroge Weston
Xavier Riley, Olympic Freightways
Nicholas Scheibel, Keebler
George South, Alpha Baking
Dennis Terry, Olympic Freightways
Edwin Torres, Olympic Freightways
Dewitt VanEllis, Geroge Weston
Hector Villeda, Interstate Brands
Edwin Ward, Alpha Baking
Buddy Zack, Interstate Brands

Are You Moving?

If so, then please contact Local 734 right away so we can continue sending you the Local 734 News and other Local Union information.

Look for the Union label!

Do your part to help keep American strong.
Buy American
Buy Union!

Saluting Our Retirees

George Brassca, Interstate Brands
Lena Braswell, Interstate Brands
Richard Cholewiak, Interstate Brands
Michael Choromokos, Alpha Baking
Robert Dearmond, Interstate Brands
Joseph Fontanetta, Alpha Baking
Robert Fox, Certified Grocers
Raymond Gums, Olympic Freightways
Shay Henderson, Barrel of Fun
Louis Hoidahl, Interstate Brands
Anthony Iniguez, Interstate Brands
Paul Janusz, Interstate Brands
Giacomo Manfredini, Alpha Baking
William Murphy, Interstate Brands
Lloyd Oliver, Interstate Brands
Freda Papageorgakis, Chicago Baking
Peter Parenti, Entenmann's
Benjamin Perez, Chicago Baking
Robert Polletta, Interstate Brands
Harry Pueyo, Interstate Brands
Kenneth Redman, Interstate Brands
Paul Roman, Interstate Brands
James Shay, Salerno
Daniel Silva, Interstate Brands
Richard Smith, Olympic Freightways
Richard Sobehrad, Entenmann's

In Memoriam

James Baitdorf, Maryann Bakery
Thomas Bekiares, Burny Brothers
Charles Billberg, Dolly Madison
Konstantin Bubulya, Silver Cup Bakery
Robert Cohn, IGA
William Conway, Alpha Baking
Lawrence Coppolino, Sara Lee
Dale Etheridge, Nabisco
Edward Evans, Community Bakery
Louis Caravaglia, Standard Brands
Thomas Giovannelli, George Weston
Robert Hayes, Gonnella
Moxie Jones, Interstate Brands
John Kangas, MaryAnn Bakery
George Karas, Augustus Bakery
John Kelsch, Ward Baking
Edward Levin, Continental Bakery
Frank Majewski, Ward Baking
John Martin, Ward Baking
Frank Olson, Tortino
Arthur Rek, Tip-Top Bakery
Levi Rock, Interstate Brands
Gildardo Villareal, Salerno
Jeffrey Weber, Interstate Brands
Joseph Widrevitz, Alpha Baking
Antjuan Woods, Interstate Brands
Important Reminder About Women’s Health and Cancer Act

The federal government asks that health plans remind plan participants about their rights under the Women’s Health and Cancer Rights Act. Covered individuals are entitled to medical benefits for breast cancer including mastectomy, breast reconstruction, reconstruction of the breast to produce a symmetrical appearance, as well as prostheses and treatment of physical complications in all stages of treatment.

Members with a computer and modem can get news about the Teamsters Union 24-hours a day at the following Internet addresses:

IBT International Union
www.teamster.org

Teamsters Local 734
www.bakerydrivers-local734.com

Remember to Update Your Beneficiary For Your Life Insurance Benefit

One of the benefits provided under your Health Benefits Plan is a Life Insurance Benefit. You may name anyone you wish as a beneficiary for this benefit.

It is important that you keep your beneficiary information up to date. When there is a marriage, divorce or death in the family, this is probably the time when you need to revise your beneficiary designation.

If you need to update your beneficiary information, contact the Benefits Fund Office and request that a “Designation of Beneficiary” form for the Life Insurance Benefit under the Health Benefit Plan be sent to you. Then complete and return the form to us. You may complete a new form as often as necessary — the new form will override any previous forms we have on file for you.

Hand Washing Is Important

Respiratory illness plunged 45 percent among naval recruits who took part in a program encouraging them to wash their hands five times a day, according to a recent study in the American Journal of Preventive Medicine that compared the recruits’ hospital visits with figures from previous year.

Consumer Reports on Health — November, 2001

Rubbing your hands together while washing them is the key to eliminating bacteria.
IBT Delegates Approve Dues Increase To Build Strike Fund and Expand Organizing

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resources to fight for their interests. "We have no choice if we want to organize the millions of non-union workers who seek to have a voice in the workplace," Hoffa said. "We have no choice if we want a Teamsters Union that takes care of its' brothers and sisters by giving them a strong strike fund. We have no choice if we want a Union that we can all be proud of."

Last June, delegates to the IBT's 26th Constitutional Convention approved creation of a Blue Ribbon Commission on Teamster Finances. The Commission recommended several changes that will allow the IBT to create a dedicated strike fund, enhance organizing campaigns and rebuild the union's net financial assets.

A Nickel An Hour For IBT Power

The approved proposal will result in an increase of about five cents per hour, per member — less than $2 per week. The theme for this convention was: "A Nickel An Hour for Teamster Power."

"This was an important decision and an important test of what kind of union we will have in the future," Local 734 President Brian Meidel said. "The choice was between a strong Teamsters Union with the resources and power to fight for members, or a weak and impotent union unable to negotiate good contracts and powerless to fight at the bargaining table due to the lack of a strong strike fund. Thankfully, delegates to the Special Convention made the proper decision and voted for a strong union that will remain a leading voice for working men and women."

Local 734 members will notice the changes of this financial plan on July 31, 2002. That's the day when membership strike benefits increase from the current, inferior $55/week to 10 times a member's hourly wage (see chart at right).

"This means that if a strike is necessary, Local 734 members will get the assistance they deserve," President Meidel said. "This is a welcome change that will benefit all of us."

Special Convention delegates join hands in a show of Teamster solidarity as they pledge to build Teamster power.

Delegates make their voices heard.

IBT Secretary-Treasurer Tom Keegel outlines the details of the Blue Ribbon Commission proposals to strengthen Teamster financial power.

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Local 734 News Notes

Metz Baking Plant (Holsum) To Shutdown Bakery

The Metz Baking Plant, also known as the Holsum or New Process Plant, owned by Sara Lee Bakery Group, (2883 S. Hillock Ave.) will close permanently by the end of July, 2002.

This shutdown will impact the entire plant, with the exception of the Teamster product loader positions. It is expected that the first date of separation will be May 20, 2002, with additional separations to occur on or about May 27th, June 21st, and July 5th. The Chicago transport and route sales operations will not be affected.

President Brian Meidel will be meeting with company officials in the near future to negotiate the terms and conditions for Local 734 members affected by this closing.

NLRB Rules Against Striking Teamsters’ Flag Display

As millions of Americans celebrated the sacrifices made by our military veterans in the fight for freedom, the National Labor Relations Board (NLRB) has told striking Teamsters in Des Moines, Iowa, to put away their American flags.

Teamsters Local 90 members are on strike against two concrete companies: Crown Redi-Mix and A-1 Ready Mix. At job sites throughout the Des Moines area, Teamsters were picketing cement truck deliveries from the two companies. In a show of patriotism, many Teamsters, a number of whom are veterans, carried the Stars and Stripes as a symbol of democracy.

“The action by the NLRB is unconscionable,” said IBT General President Jim Hoffa. “Many Teamsters are veterans and have fought hard for our flag. Now the NLRB tells them not to display the flag representing the freedoms that many of our brothers and sisters died for. It is a sad day for America.”

The NLRB, in a direct slap in the face of freedom, instructed officials from Teamsters Local 90 that the American flags were an illegal signal that a strike is taking place.

MEETINGS

Mark your calendar TODAY for these upcoming meetings:

- June 15, 2002 • October 19, 2002
- November 16, 2002 • December 21, 2002

There are no meetings during July, August, and September.

MEETINGS BEGIN AT 8:00 P.M. SHARP.

For the location of these meetings members call 312-733-2724

Get A Withdrawal Card When You Leave Your Job

Be sure you request a withdrawal card when being laid-off or terminating your employment. The charge for a withdrawal card is still only 50¢ but all initiation fees and back dues must be paid before the withdrawal card is issued.

Stop by, or call the union office for a withdrawal card. It is your responsibility to obtain a Withdrawal Card so please take care of it as soon as possible after leaving the company, so that you will not be obligated to pay extra dues. Failure to request a Withdrawal Card may cause you to pay back dues.

In accordance with Article XVIII, Section 6(i) of the IBT Constitution, “it shall be compulsory for any active member on withdrawal card to deposit his withdrawal card immediately upon return to employment at the craft.”

Teamsters Local 734
300 S. Ashland, Suite #306
Chicago, Illinois 60607

WITHDRAWAL CARD REQUEST

NAME __________________________
S.S. No. _________________________
PHONE __________________________
ADDRESS _________________________
MY LAST DAY OF WORK _____________
NAME OF EMPLOYER ________________
REASON FOR LEAVING (quit, laid off, terminated, etc.) ________________________
(SIGNATURE) __________________________ DATE __________________________

BAKERY DRIVERS WELFARE FUND
1645 W JACkSON
CHICAGO, IL 60612