



Report from Olympia No.10

Teamsters Local 117

News for DOC Teamsters - 2012 Legislative Session in Olympia



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2012 SESSION BRINGS BIG WINS FOR DOC TEAMSTERS

Early release defeated! Uniform bill on the way to the Governor's desk for her signature!



Officer John Christy of WSP

During the 2012 legislative session, Teamsters prevailed in both defending against disastrous cuts to the Department of Corrections and in passing important legislation for Corrections' workers.

Thank you to all DOC Teamsters who worked so hard this session to defend the rights of correctional employees!

What follows is a recap of Local 117's fight in Olympia over the past few months:

1. EARLY RELEASE

Before special session convened on November 28, the Governor made a proposal that called for releasing low and moderate risk offenders (including sex offenders) five months early, closing minimum security units and repurposing the Washington State Reformatory from a medium to a minimum facility.

Dozens of members and Union staff testified against these cuts and for the protection of jobs as well as staff and public safety.

Legislators heard us loud and clear: Not only was the Governor's proposal bad public policy,

but it would place our communities at risk.

At this time, the early release proposal is off the table.

2. INTEREST ARBITRATION - EHB 2011

Passage of safety-related interest arbitration legislation (EHB 2011) for correctional employees has been a prime objective for DOC Teamsters over the last year.

EHB 2011 would allow a neutral arbitrator to address safety-related issues that are not resolved during collective bargaining.

The original prime sponsors reintroduced the



Local 117 members meet with Senator Lisa Brown's Senior Policy Analyst to discuss the uniform bill.

bill this session, and EHB 2011 retained its status in the House Rules Committee for some time.

We worked tirelessly to get the bill out of Rules, arguing that interest arbitration as a course of action is vital for correctional employees given the failure of SB 5907 to adequately address safety issues within the DOC following the murder of Jayme Biendl.



Local 117 members gather at the State Capitol for Teamsters Lobby Day on February 23.

Despite our efforts, EHB 2011 was not pulled from Rules for a floor vote by the February 14 deadline.

While a major disappointment, it is a call for us to do all we can in the interim to prepare to move this legislation forward again next session.

3. OFFICER UNIFORM BILL - HB 2346

One of your Local Union's goals this session was to pass legislation to ensure that correctional officers have better, more professional uniforms.

A bill that originated in the House - HB 2346 - removed the requirement that correctional officers purchase uniforms made by inmates.

This bill embodied the simple, sensible principle that inmates should not make the uniforms worn by the officers who oversee them.

Needless to say, our message was about more than just quality - it was about professionalism, authority and safety; it was about our officers

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having the same respect afforded them as other law enforcement personnel; and it was about the morale of our officers at a time when the DOC had been hit with hundreds of millions of dollars in budget cuts in the last three years.

Legislators heard our cry. Dozens of members (as well as representatives from a private vendor) testified in support of the bill. Also in support were the Washington State Patrol Troopers Association, Washington Council of Police and Sheriffs, Washington Council of Firefighters, Washington State Labor Council, Washington Federation of State Employees and other labor allies.

Despite strong opposition from the Department of Corrections and Correctional Industries, as well as the fiscal note attached to the bill, HB 2346 was passed out of the House with a vote of 92-3 and out of the Senate with a vote of 45-3.

HB 2346 is now on its way to the Governor's desk for signature. We do not anticipate that the Governor will veto the bill given its overwhelming, bipartisan support.

While funding for the bill currently appears only in the House budget, we are also very optimistic that funding for it will appear in the final, reconciled version of the budget.

Of course, we are continuing to work to ensure that HB 2346 is signed into law and that Local 117 members get their new uniforms and wear them with pride!

4. CALLING ON REVENUE, JOBS!

In an effort to address the fiscal crisis and stave off attacks on DOC, Local 117 teamed up with a coalition of unions to fight the elimination of local revenue streams and support a revenue package that focuses on cutting corporate tax loopholes and forcing the wealthiest 1% to pay their fair share.

Local 117 has also been supporting a comprehensive jobs package that would further stimulate economic growth and get us back on track. To date, an agreement on either package has yet to be reached.

5. FIGHTING ATTACKS ON OUR PENSIONS!

A bill originating in the Senate - SB 6543 - sought to eliminate overtime for the purpose of pension calculation. We, along with our labor allies, have been strongly opposed to this bill.

The bill was last heard in the Senate Ways and Means Committee on February 16, and we are fairly optimistic that it will not move any further.

Congratulations, again, on your tremendous work this session!

Needless to say, the victories on early release and uniforms would not have been possible without the tireless work of Local 117 members testifying, lobbying, emailing, and calling their legislators to speak out in support of issues important to our State's correctional workers.

Hope to see you in Olympia again next session!



DOC Teamsters on the Senate floor.



TEAMSTERS NON-PARTISAN PAC

Public employees are under attack like never before. Big Business outspends working people by more than 15-1 in Washington D.C. and Olympia to influence legislators and push their anti-worker agenda.

Last year, corporate-backed politicians attacked collective bargaining rights for workers in Wisconsin. Recently, the Indiana State Legislature passed "right to work FOR LESS" legislation that will cripple labor Unions.

Don't think it can't happen here! Every year, legislators right here in Washington State introduce the same anti-Union bills.

As Union members, we often hear that it's "time to fight back," but what concrete steps can we take to protect the rights, wages, and benefits of working people?

FIGHT BACK NOW WITH DRIVE!

You can take a stand for the middle class by contributing to DRIVE – the Teamsters' political action committee. DRIVE funds campaigns to fight for the rights of Union members to bargain together at work for better pay, benefits, and retirement.

DRIVE is non-partisan and independent from any political party.

Stand with your fellow Teamsters. Fight back by participating in DRIVE!

To learn how you can participate in DRIVE, talk to your Business Representative or call your Local Union office at 206-441-4860.

INTERESTED IN RUNNING FOR OFFICE? Teamsters Local 117 Candidate Training



Learn the nuts and bolts of putting together a successful campaign as well as the fundamentals for implementing pro-worker policy as an elected official. The training is designed for both candidates and campaign managers. Topics will include: campaign planning, fund-raising, messaging, volunteer management, union affiliation support and much more!

Saturday, March 31st 9AM-1PM
Teamsters Building - 14675 Interurban Ave. S. Tukwila, WA 98168

For more info., contact Political Action Coordinator, Lily Wilson-Codega at 206-794-2606.