



# The Guardian

News from the hardworking men and women of DOC

Members of Teamsters Local 117

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# VOTE NOW ON YOUR 2011-2013 CONTRACT!

## Rank-and-file Bargaining Committee recommends a YES vote

Over the last several months, Teamster Correctional Employees have been in the fight of their lives.

Faced with a \$4.6 billion State budget deficit and across-the-board cuts at DOC that put our lives, our livelihoods, and our communities in danger, we raised our voices and took action.

We resoundingly rejected the State's substandard contract proposal last September, spoke with our legislators in a series of town hall meetings, raised informational pickets, and ran a coordinated media campaign against the cuts.

On December 9, 2010, over 400 Correctional Employees, our families, and fellow Teamster supporters marched on the State Capitol in Olympia in a *Day of Action!* to demand dignity and respect.

### IMPACT FELT STATEWIDE

Our campaign has had an incredible impact. We fought back an ultimatum from the State that would have increased our health care premiums by more than 100%. We restored over 90% of the kitchen staff and half of the recreational staff in our State's prisons.

These changes could not have been pos-

sible without hundreds and hundreds of Correctional Employees across the State speaking out against these cuts and demanding safety, dignity and respect.

Throughout our fight, your Union Bargaining Committee has been in challenging negotiations with the State over your 2011-2013 collective bargaining agreement. On December 14, 2010, after several months of bargaining, the Committee achieved a tentative agreement on your contract. *This also would not have been possible without your collective actions!*

### VOTE NOW ON YOUR CONTRACT!

Now is the time for you to exercise your right to vote on your 2011-2013 collective bargaining agreement! **WE NEED YOU TO VOTE!**

Your Union Bargaining Committee, which includes 16 rank-and-file members from institutions across the State, unanimously recommends that you vote YES to approve this proposal.

Although this is not the agreement that your Union Bargaining Committee wanted, given the current budget realities, the Committee believes that the agreement is important to ratify for a

number of reasons:

1. It helps to offset the 3% wage reduction with a monthly accrual of 5.2 hours of new paid leave;
2. It restores the wage rate at the end of the contract so the temporary 3% salary reduction does not create a lower baseline for the future;
3. It protects the overtime rate from the 3% reduction;
4. It ensures that other employees, including management, share in the same wage reduction;
5. It provides a "me too" clause that ensures our members get the same deal if any other State employees, including management, receive less than a 3% salary reduction during the life of the contract; and
6. It protects against further cuts, including furloughs, in the absence of a significant revenue loss.

"We achieved the best possible agreement given the state of our economy," said Terry Paolino, a Bargaining Committee member and Correctional Sergeant at WSP with 20-years' experience. "A

# A message from your Director of Corrections



## DEFENDING CUSTODY AND NON-CUSTODY ALIKE

Some concern has been voiced recently that your Local Union may not be as committed in the fight to defend the rights of non-custody staff as compared with custody staff. As one who began my career in non-sworn law enforcement positions prior to becoming a sworn law enforcement officer, I understand the divide that can occur between those in uniform and those who are not. It has always been my personal commitment to you that we fight for ALL members at DOC. I am deeply concerned when any member

feels inadequately represented by their Union, and would like to address the concerns of our non-custody members in this column.

As Tawny Humbert, a Secretary Senior at WSP who spoke at the **Day of Action!** event on December 9, 2010, said: "We non-custody staff pull everything together. If we are not present at our jobs, it puts everybody's life at risk." Your Local Union shares this belief and is fighting exceedingly hard to protect the rights of custody and non-custody staff alike. As I have shared with many of you, don't just listen to what we have to say, but look at the actions we are taking and the changes that have been made. On behalf of non-custody staff in particular, your Union:

- Sought an injunction to stop the ESSB 6503 furloughs from being imposed on non-custody staff. In fact, Secretary-Treasurer Thompson and I felt so strongly about the impact on our non-custody members that she argued the case herself and I drafted the legal documents;
- Filed a pending Thurston County lawsuit against the ESSB 6503 furloughs to non-custody staff;
- Filed a contractual grievance on behalf of all non-custody members who are subject to the ESSB 6503 furloughs (Grievance 149-10). A three-day arbitration on that grievance is scheduled for February 7, 11, and 15, and I will be helping present that case to our arbitrator;
- Is the only Union left in this State that is fighting the ESSB 6503 furloughs to non-custody staff;
- Introduced legislation to assist our non-custody nursing members with mandatory overtime, and are fighting to achieve interest arbitration for our custody and non-custody members alike;
- Fought to ensure the safety of non-custody A/C Cooks when the State proposed elimination of custody staff in the kitchen, and we prevailed in that fight when funding was restored;
- Increased the number of non-custody Shop Stewards to receive more input from you.

Please know that your Union fights daily to protect and enhance the rights of our non-custody members. We fight unjust discipline imposed on non-custody members, we fight detrimental changes in working conditions on behalf of non-custody members, and we are fighting to get back what you lost through furloughs.

No matter what our job classification, it is critically important that we stand together as one unified group to fight for the safety, dignity, and respect for ALL Correctional Employees. Your Local Union is committed to this principle, and aggressively represents and defends any member whose rights have been violated, custody and non-custody alike. If you still have doubts or concerns, please contact me directly anytime.

As always, thank you for your service.

Respectfully,

James V. Smith II  
Director of Corrections and Law Enforcement

## CONTRACT VOTE

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no vote means that we leave ourselves vulnerable to the legislature taking away a whole lot more than 3%. The bottom line is that we need a contract in place to protect ourselves."

Local 117 Secretary-Treasurer Tracey A. Thompson, agrees. "In this uncertain economic climate, with an estimated \$4.6 billion budget shortfall for the 2011-2013 biennium, your Union Bargaining Committee felt strongly that it is far better to secure an agreement with significant protections, rather than take the risk of waiting to leave it up to the politicians who could legislate more drastic reductions this session without the negotiated protections," she said.

Your Bargaining Committee is standing united behind this agreement and strongly recommends that you vote YES. It is critically important that you exercise your right to vote and send a message to the State that you care about your wages, hours, and working conditions.

### THIS IS YOUR CONTRACT – STAND UP AND BE COUNTED!

Internet and telephone polls opened at 12:01 AM on Thursday, January 20 and will close at 11:59 P.M. on Friday, January 28. On Monday, January 31, there will be one day of on-site voting at your institution. For more detailed information about the contract vote, including voting instructions, times, locations, and a list of FAQs, please visit your Local Union's website at [www.teamsters117.org](http://www.teamsters117.org) or talk to your Business Representative.

# FIGHTING FOR RESPECT IN OLYMPIA!

*The Teamsters Legislative SWAT Team hits the ground running*



*DOC members march on the Capitol in a Day of Action!*

**O**n January 10, 2011, an extremely challenging 105-day legislative session began in Olympia. Your Local Union continues to fight hard to protect the interests of working families, as the Washington State Legislature struggles to confront a \$4.6 billion deficit.

Your Union's Government Relations Coordinator Anna Jancewicz will be in Olympia every day throughout the session representing members of Teamsters Local 117, while Political Action Coordinator Lily Wilson-Codega is busy mobilizing members from our Legislative and Political Action Committees to provide testimony, lobbying, and support.

Your Local Union's top priorities for the session include fighting to reverse pieces of the across-the-board budget reductions that were imposed on State employees at the Department of Corrections (DOC), as well as protecting Teamsters at DOC from further cuts that

jeopardize the safety of Correctional Employees and the public. We are also working hard to stave off threats of further reductions in staffing and further facility closures at DOC.

In addition, your Union will be working to pass three important bills to protect Correctional Employees and their families:

### **1. Interest Arbitration Legislation for Correctional Employees**

Interest arbitration allows a neutral arbitrator to settle a contract if the parties cannot reach an agreement in negotiations. County Correctional Employees, the Washington State Patrol, local police officers, firefighters and other critical law enforcement and public safety professionals have a statutory right to interest arbitration. It is time that our State's Correctional Employees are afforded this basic protection.

### **2. Mandatory Overtime Prohibition for Nurses**

Nurses at DOC work in an extremely stressful environment of administering health care services to convicted felons. Currently, nurses in our State's prisons are frequently subjected to mandatory overtime. Fatigue created by long, grueling hours creates an unsafe working environment for nurses within our State's prisons. It's time we extend the current prohibition on mandatory overtime to State nurses.

### **3. Lift the Firearms Restrictions for Off-Duty Correctional Employees**

Correctional Employees in our State's prisons are often subjected to serious threats by convicted felons, who are later released into our communities. While off-duty, many DOC employees have been directly threatened and harassed by former

inmates. Correctional Employees should have the same right as other law enforcement professionals to protect themselves and their families.

Your Union is developing a legislative SWAT team of members who will be available to testify on these and other bills at public hearings during session.

To date, several Correctional Employees have testified in Olympia, including Clallam Bay PAC member Greg Bellamy, who testified before the Senate Human Services and Corrections Committee on SB 5024, legislation that would place restrictions on legal claims initiated by offenders.

On Friday, January 21, Joyce Clegg and Terese Hutchins, RN2s at WCC and MCC respectively, testified on HB 1290, the mandatory overtime bill for nursing staff. "This is an incredibly important bill to protect our safety and the safety of our patients," Clegg said.

If you are interested in joining this team, please contact Political Action Coordinator Lily Wilson-Codega at 206-441-4860 ext. 1258.

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# SAFETY, DIGNITY AND RESPECT!

*Correctional Employees Day of Action! - Dec. 9, 2010*

