

Vote “NO” at UPS! Prepare for the next stage of the battle against UPS and the Teamsters bureaucracy!

The UPS Workers Rank-and-File Committee
17 August 2023

Attend the online public meeting, “The ‘No’ vote at UPS and the next stage of the battle against the Teamsters bureaucracy,” hosted by the UPS Workers Rank-and-File Committee, this Sunday, August 20, at 7:00 p.m. Eastern. Register for the event [here](#).

Brothers and Sisters,

With less than a week left to vote on the UPS contract, we are urging you to make one last push to organize a rejection and to send this tentative agreement into the trash where it belongs.

Not only the national master agreement but the regional supplements prove that the bureaucracy lied when they said they would put up a fight against UPS. We want and deserve more, especially now that UPS is making record revenues and profits. Our demands include:

- Higher wage increases for part-timers, who would be making \$37 per hour if wages kept pace with inflation since the late 1970s;
- A general wage increase for all part-timers, including new hires (who won’t get the \$7.50 GWI under the current deal);
- Increases in pension contributions to ALL funds, not just to the IBT-UPS and New England funds;
- The immediate installation of air conditioning in all vehicles *and* all warehouses;
- Tens of thousands of new full-time positions, so part-timers don’t have to wait years or decades for jobs to open up.

The Teamsters bureaucrats are on an all-out propaganda blitz to tell us this is the best we can get. They want us to believe that we are powerless before the company. We’re not. We’re in our most powerful position in decades. Not only is the company making

more money than ever, but there is the biggest strike movement in decades going on right now.

Just next month, the contracts at Ford, GM and Stellantis (what used to be Chrysler) expire. If we reject this deal, it will set the stage for a powerful common fight uniting 340,000 UPS workers and 150,000 autoworkers. That’s just what the Teamsters bureaucracy, and management, are afraid of. If we join ranks with the autoworkers, that will give us more strength to fight not only management in both industries but the sellout attempts by the Teamsters and the United Auto Workers. It would set an example and inspire workers all over the world.

Teamsters bureaucrats are threatening people by claiming that if we don’t accept this contract, the next one will be even worse. That is nothing more than a declaration that they are on management’s side.

The bureaucracy is worse than dead weight. We don’t need their permission to organize a fight. In reality, our fight is not only against UPS but against the management stooges who control the Teamsters union.

It is not a question of bad apples at the top; the bureaucracy, which we have no control over, is what *produces* the bad apples. Workers are opposed to the contract, but the Teamsters locals voted 161 to 0 to endorse it. The so-called “reformer” Sean O’Brien, despite all the empty noise about being “strike ready,” has turned out to be no different than Hoffa and those that came before him. As for the Teamsters for a Democratic Union, they function as little more than O’Brien and the bureaucracy’s PR department.

The “No” vote must be the start of our fight to finally settle our score with the bureaucracy, which has sold us out for decades, to throw it out and return power to the

Teamsters membership where it belongs. The bargaining committee must be thrown out and replaced with one made up entirely of real rank-and-file representatives, not the administration's handpicked yes men, and the next round of negotiations livestreamed to prevent another sellout. We must make immediate preparations for a strike, including the provision of adequate strike pay for all from the first day of any walkout, with special attention given to our part-timers, who are already fighting to make ends meet.

Many of our coworkers don't like the deal but are afraid of the consequences if they vote it down because of the bureaucracy's scare tactics. Meanwhile, others claim that a "no" vote, by itself, will convince O'Brien and the bargaining committee to come back with something better. That is a dangerous illusion, and something that the bureaucracy itself has denied. Those who think this are either misinformed or, in some cases, deliberately acting as O'Brien's backup, leaving the "vote no" camp unprepared and disarmed in the face of phase 2 of the sellout.

The answer to this is: We need structures which we control. On our own, the Teamsters bureaucrats will be able to isolate us and wear us down. Organized, we will be powerful enough to countermand this and all future sellouts. We call on our coworkers to join us in building a network of rank-and-file committees, linking hubs and other facilities together across the country.

We know many workers are interested in rank-and-file committees, but they don't know how to go about forming one. While there is no single recipe, here are some basic guidelines for how to do it:

- Find a group of like-minded workers at your hub who agree that they have to organize independently of the bureaucracy. To ensure rank-and-file workers have control and are protected as much as possible from victimization, membership in the group should not be open to local union officials. A rank-and-file committee does not have to be a large group to start out. The power of your group is that it has a strategy with which UPS workers can fight.

- Organize an initial discussion. Agree on a common set of principles and demands, and write them down in a founding statement, which announces and explains the committee to your coworkers.

- Distribute your statement as widely as possible and

encourage everyone who agrees with it to join. Take care to avoid retaliation either by union officials or by management. Consider secure methods of distribution, including leaving flyers in break rooms or even restrooms (where there are no security cameras), as well as posting it online and in chat groups.

- Affiliate your group with the national UPS Workers Rank-and-File Committee. Contact us by emailing upsrankandfilecommittee@gmail.com, and send delegates from your group to future meetings of the national committee.

- Build support in the working class in your area. Go to strategic workplaces, such as major factories, railyards and shipping hubs for other companies, to distribute your statement and gather contact information. Your real allies are not the big business Democratic and Republican parties or the bureaucrats of other unions, but rank-and-file workers everywhere.

We all have to use the next several days to build up as big a "No" vote as possible. But no matter happens with the vote, the most basic issue is we have to deal with this union bureaucracy which is sabotaging us. We are confident that, with the right strategy and organization, we can sweep them aside. In the end, despite its resources and connections, the Teamsters bureaucracy is made up of only a few thousand people. The power of the working class, which is far greater, is in our numbers and unity. The only question is that we know how to use it.

Contact the UPS Workers Rank-and-File Committee by emailing upsrankandfilecommittee@gmail.com.

For a printable copy of this statement, [click here](#).



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wsws.org/contact