

Justice for Port Truck Drivers



PRESS ADVISORY: Thursday, November 13, 2014

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Los Angeles port truck drivers resume strike at marine terminals and trucking yards following egregious violations to “cooling off” period brokered by Mayor Eric Garcetti; Drivers to host 12:00 Noon PST press conference announcing plans and picketing locations

Los Angeles, CA – This morning, port truck drivers from two of Los Angeles’ leading drayage firms – [Total Transportation Services Inc. \(TTSI\)](#) and [Pacific 9 Transportation \(Pac 9\)](#) – resumed picketing at company offices and marine terminals at the twin ports of Los Angeles and Long Beach, through which more than 40 percent of our nation’s imports are moved. Drivers will host a press conference to announce plans and picketing locations at a 12:00 Noon PST press conference.

What: Press conference with port truck drivers, labor, community, and faith leaders

Who: Striking port truck drivers

Ron Herrera, Executive Director, Teamsters National Hispanic Caucus; Secretary-Treasurer, Teamsters Local 396; Trustee, Joint Council 42

Maria Elena Durazo, Secretary-Treasurer, Los Angeles County Federation of Labor, AFL-CIO

Victoria Martinez, Walmart Worker who was recently fired from Pico Rivera store

Rev. William Smart, Board Vice Chair, Clergy and Laity United for Economic Justice, Los Angeles (CLUE), President/CEO, Southern Christian Leadership Conference of Southern California (SCLC), Senior Pastor, Christ Liberation Ministries

Fr. William Connor, Pastor Emeritus, St. Joseph's Catholic Church, Long Beach; Board Member, CLUE

Elder Shelton Ervin, Church One, Long Beach; Board Member, CLUE

Pastor Douglas Johnstone, Circuit Counselor, Long Beach Lutheran Churches; Board Member, CLUE

Where: Wilmington Waterfront Park, 1206 W. C Street, Wilmington, CA 90744 (at Hawaiian Ave.)
Take the C Street exit off the 110 Freeway

Call In: 712-432-0490; Participant code: 984013#

When: Thursday, November 13, 2014; 12:00 Noon PST

In July, drivers went on an indefinite [strike](#) to protest severe and continuing labor law violations – the drivers’ fourth such strike in a year. After five days of picketing that dramatically impacted port operations and garnered international media attention, Los Angeles Mayor Eric Garcetti brokered a [“cooling off” period](#), which included a critical agreement by companies to accept all drivers back to work without retaliation. Despite commitments to Mayor Garcetti, the companies have dramatically escalated retaliatory activity, clearly violating the terms of the cooling off period. These retaliations include the [firing of 35 drivers](#) by TTSI for refusing to withdraw their claims for wage theft and publicly denounce the Teamsters Union and a dramatic increase in [illegal deductions](#) from driver paychecks by Pac 9, leaving some drivers with negative paychecks – and many working below minimum wage.

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Drivers at Green Fleet Systems (GFS) have agreed to remain in the “cooling off” period as productive discussions, which began during the course of litigation, are continuing between the company owner and the Teamsters union. GFS drivers have gone on strike four times in the past year to protest unfair labor practices by their employer. On Nov. 7, two GFS drivers who had been fired for their union activities and for filing wage and hour claims were [returned to work](#) pursuant to a rare Federal 10(j) court order.

News outlets are encouraged to ask the public to contribute to the Justice for Port Drivers Hardship Fund. Contributions can be made to Labor Community Services AFL-CIO, a nonprofit 501(c)(3) affiliated with the Los Angeles County Federation of Labor. Contributions can be made online via PayPal at www.laborcommunityservicesla.org, or mail a check made out to “Labor Community Services” and include “Justice for Port Drivers Hardship Fund” in the memo. Checks should be mailed to:

Labor Community Services AFL-CIO
2130 W. James M. Wood Blvd.
Los Angeles, CA 90006
ATTN: Justice for Port Drivers Hardship Fund

Background

These escalating actions come as the drayage industry is growing increasingly desperate and retaliatory; doing everything it can – including unending [retaliation in flagrant violation of U.S. labor laws](#) – to hold onto a business model that relies on independent contractors. Multiple determinations – by the California Division of Labor Standards Enforcement and Employment Development Department, Region 21 of the National Labor Relations Board, and Federal District Judge – have all rendered the industry’s business model illegal. These companies are continuing to retaliate against their employees for engaging in union and protected concerted activities. They are threatening and otherwise intimidating, restraining, and coercing employees for exercising their rights under the National Labor Relations Act.

Port truck drivers work long hours hauling nearly [\\$4 billion](#) worth of cargo every day, yet often receive paychecks below the minimum wage. These professional drivers, who transport imports from American seaports for companies like Walmart, Home Depot, Target, and Polo/Ralph Lauren, are on the front lines of the fight to end wage theft through misclassification as “independent contractors.” Unwilling to wait for the [lawless industry](#) to transform, drivers are [rising up](#), to improve their jobs and rebuild the ever diminishing middle-class.

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