



INTERNATIONAL LONGSHORE & WAREHOUSE UNION

Local 502

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OFFICIAL BULLETIN

GCT Planners VOTE UNION YES Campaign

Dear GCT Planners,

We are writing to you because we understand that the employer has raised some issues about the application by ILWU Local 502 to become your union and represent you in collective bargaining. You and your co-workers may have heard many different things over the past few days and you likely have some questions.

The purpose of becoming part of a union is to bring dignity and democracy to your workplace so that you, the workers, will have a voice and a vote in your workplace. Union representation means you are part of a group of workers that has the right to negotiate things like wages, hours of work, benefits, pensions and seniority rights.

Contrary to what you may have heard, the Union has not made promises to anyone except to point out that, as part of the Union, you will have the right to negotiate as a group to determine your wages and benefits and other things affecting your work and home life. It is a fact that unionized workplaces overall have higher wages, better working conditions and better benefits than non-union work places. This is the direct result of being able to negotiate with the employer, not as an individual but as a union.

The collective bargaining process involves the workers on the job, through the negotiating committee, elected by you from among your co-workers. The ILWU is committed to free and fair collective bargaining and strikes are very rare in our history. In fact, the vast majority of contract negotiations in the longshoring industry across Canada are settled without a strike or lockout.

It is a union contract, as the result of collective bargaining, which gives workers certain guarantees with respect to wages, regular pay increases, scheduling and more. Collective agreements also have processes to deal with disputes that may arise on the job so the workers are not subject to arbitrary changes or unreasonable discipline by the employer. Both the Employer and the Union are bound by the terms of the agreement.

The ILWU is a democratic organization that has a constitution that sets out the aims and purpose of the Union and has rules of procedure by which to conduct our affairs and every member has a voice and a vote. We have a long and storied history of fighting to protect the rights of workers. The ILWU has also long been known to be a progressive and democratic union dedicated to the advancement of not only its members but to the advancement of all working people.

The ILWU wants to welcome you into our family and to protect and improve your jobs that you have today. The Employer does not want you to be represented by the Union. It prefers to keep things the way they are. In my opinion, the Employer does not want the Union to represent you because it does not want to give up full control of your working lives and does not want you and your co-workers to have more power and more say in the workplace.

Do not be intimidated. It is your choice -- in fact it is your constitutional right as a worker in Canada -- to join a union. We are here to help you, and our goal is to make your workplace more equitable and fair. Remember, you are the Union and only you can make it happen.

Tom Doran
President – ILWU Local 502

