

IAM Mechanic's Union Local 701

Press Release UPDATE Re: M&K Truck Centers (Laborforce, LLC) Strike
December 7, 2023



12/7/2023

Members of IAM Mechanics Union Local 701 at M&K Truck Centers (Laborforce, LLC) have been on strike since November 1, 2023, and are currently in their second month of withholding their labor to fight for a fair and just contract that retains their core benefits. During this labor stoppage, the Union has filed multiple charges with the NLRB for the company's unfair labor practices. As of today, the company has stopped responding to bargaining date requests, and is unwilling to sit back at the table with the Union to continue negotiations over a successor agreement to end this dispute. For details of what led to this strike, and the pressing strike issues, please read the original release below. Any press or media outlets looking for additional information or interviews should contact our media liaison, Local 701 Business Representative Ronnie Gonzalez, at 708-728-5708 or email him at rgonzalez@mech701.org.

11/7/2023

IAM Mechanics' Union Local 701 has been engaged in negotiations with M&K Truck Centers (Laborforce, LLC) since July of 2023, for their Alsip location. The parties' labor agreement expired on August 31, 2023, and the bargaining unit members continued working under an extension agreement.

On October 16 2023, the company made its Last, Best, and Final offer, which gutted the core of the members benefits. The proposal included terminating participation in the Union's Health & Welfare and 401(k) plans, and instead moved the members into company-provided plans with substantially worse benefits. The proposed elimination follows on the heels of the last negotiations, which already chipped away at the members retirement benefits. The offer also failed to address several key Union proposals including the elimination of a two-tier pay structure.

On October 29, 2023, the membership unanimously rejected the offer and authorized a strike. When the extension agreement ended on October 31, 2023, the members went on strike as of the start of business Wednesday, November 1, 2023.

Withholding labor until fair working terms and conditions are agreed to is a Union member's last resort and the decision was not made lightly. Indeed, the Union sincerely hoped to avoid a strike, but the last-minute removal of all Union provided benefits resulted in a proposed agreement that the membership simply could not accept.

STRIKE ISSUES

The open issues that resulted in the membership's rejection of the offer and support of a strike include the following:

- Elimination of the current union healthcare - the same healthcare that nearly all Union members have the option to enjoy. The proposed employer-sponsored healthcare would result in huge cost increases (for example tripled out of pocket maximums) and includes a weekly employee payroll deduction.
- Elimination of the current Union 401(k). Participation in the company-sponsored 401(k) Plan provides a substantially reduced benefit than the current benefit. In most cases, a member would have to contribute more than 10% of gross income each week to make up the difference in the lack of contributions.

The employer has not claimed an inability to pay, and is not offering a quid-pro-quo or anything of meaningful value in exchange for what would be huge concessions. The money savings would apparently go towards corporate profits, and is not going to show up on the members' pay checks.

In addition to these major issues, other issues include an unwillingness to fully support training that will lead to more qualified technicians; an unwillingness to retain/improve the retirement benefits; and removal of a two-tier pay system.

The Union's guiding principle for these negotiations has been to improve the working terms and conditions in order to better attract qualified technicians. A known problem that even company has repeatedly acknowledged exists. The items the company is stuck on, which triggered the strike, and its refusal to agree to these basic, improvements, along with benefit retentions, are counter-productive to this mutually beneficial goal.

We appreciate the public's understanding, as well as support we are already receiving, in our fight to improve the working terms and conditions of our highly skilled technicians who fix the trucks Americans depend on each day to deliver products you enjoy, keeping them moving safely on the road.

The strike line is located at 5300 W. Plattner Dr., Alsip, Il 60803, and is up from 6:00am to 12:00am Monday through Friday, and from 6:00am to 3:30pm on Saturday, and encourage any public support.

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