



# Teamsters for a Democratic Union

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## Hoffa Tells Washington DC Local 639 Members: “Vote till you get it right”

Last November, the incumbent top officers, including International Trustee John Steger, were voted out of office in Washington D.C. Local 639. James Hoffa was upset that his man lost, so now he’s making the members vote again!

On July 26, Hoffa placed Local 639 into trusteeship, so that he could hold another election, and try to get Steger back into office.

This kind of trick cannot stand. It’s up to the 10,000 members of Local 639 to turn out in record numbers to say “no” to “vote till you get it right.”

When the members voted for a new leadership team — the Members United Slate — last November, the defeated officers ran the election and the count. They set the rules. They controlled the printing and counting of the ballots. They hired the man who ran the count. The ballots were counted and recounted under their control. The winners and losers shook hands. Not one observer questioned the count. The ballots and the tally sheets were sealed into a box, which was then under the control of Secretary Treasurer John Steger. But, 18 days later, when representatives of the International Union came to review challenged ballots and finalize the results, the box had been tampered with! Later, when the ballots were examined, the tally sheets had mysteriously disappeared and the results had mysteriously changed, so that now the defeated incumbents had the most votes.

Who substituted ballots? The defeated incumbents, who had access and motive, were responsible for ballot integrity. Joint Council 55 ruled that the original results stand. The Department of Labor reviewed the situation also, and came to the same conclusion. Leaders of the Teamster National Black Caucus (TNBC) have asked Hoffa to not interfere.

But Hoffa has put the newly elected officers into an “emergency” trusteeship. It seems that if you lose an election and are Hoffa’s pals, and then tamper with the ballots, you get a second chance. Unfortunately, this is not an isolated case. Hoffa has tried “vote till you get it right” before. Fortunately, in each case the members have seen right through it, and turned out big to restore the democratic will. Let’s hope that happens in Local 639.

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