



Questions and Answers **The “Right to Work” Lawsuit against the UAW and Freightliner**

On Jan. 24, the National Right to Work Legal Defense Foundation, an anti-union group which has opposed our efforts to organize and bargain at Freightliner for the past three years, filed a lawsuit against the UAW and Freightliner.

The lawsuit alleges that we did not make up our own minds about whether to become part of the UAW. It says Freightliner and the UAW conspired to coerce us into signing union authorization cards that we did not want to sign, or coerced us into voting “yes” for a union when we really wanted to vote “no.”

Q: Will this lawsuit affect our contract?

A: No. UAW members in Mount Holly, Cleveland, Gastonia, High Point, N.C.; Memphis, Tenn., and Duluth Ga., have legally binding contracts with Freightliner. Nothing in the complaint filed by the RTW Foundation requests the Court to overturn our agreements.

Q: If they win, can they take away our union?

A: No.

Q: If we can keep our union and our contract, then what is this lawsuit about?

A: The National Right to Work Legal Defense Foundation is trying to win money damages from Freightliner and the UAW.

Q: Wasn’t there already a case about this?

A: Yes. The underlying facts in the Right to Work lawsuit have already been considered by the National Labor Relations Board (NLRB), and all claims have been settled or dismissed. Most recently, the RTW Foundation attempted to file objections to a union election in High Point, alleging “collusion” between the UAW and Freightliner.

These objections were dismissed by the NLRB. Two members of the Labor Relations Board, both appointed by President Bush, stated that the legal papers presented by Right to Work “do not support collusion by the parties.”

Q: If they already lost once, why do they have the right to sue again?

A: The present case was filed in U.S. District Court in North Carolina, which is a different forum than the NLRB. Our attorneys will certainly point out that these matters have already been considered and settled by the NLRB. District courts often give weight to the rulings of appropriate federal agencies, but we can't predict how the court will rule in this case.

Q: The Right to Work lawsuit says the "UAW secretly agreed that it would freeze the wages of represented employees [and] increase their benefit costs." But I got to vote, in public, on a contract which delivered a pay raise and *decreased* the cost of my health insurance. Are they allowed to make false statements in a lawsuit?

A: The statements in a lawsuit are merely claims, or allegations. To win the lawsuit, the Right to Work Foundation would have to present enough evidence to prove to a judge or jury that their claims are true.

Q: Everyone benefits from our contract, so why are some Freightliner employees named as plaintiffs in this lawsuit?

A: Any individual has a right to seek legal counsel, even if it is from an organization that represents the interests of employers. It is the policy of the UAW to respect all Freightliner employees, and to offer them the opportunity to join our union if they choose to do so.

Q: What is the National Right to Work Legal Defense Foundation?

A: It is a group that opposes unions and the right to organize. The RTW Foundation and its sister organization, the National Right to Work (RTW) Committee, have a combined budget of more than \$15 million a year. Their 200 person staff, including lawyers, lobbyists, and publicists, operates out of offices in Springfield, Va., a suburb of Washington, D.C.

The NRTW Committee was founded – and has historically been funded – by employers who do not want their workers to exercise their right to join a union.

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