



UFCW Local 832 in Winnipeg, Canada, Ratifies New Contract That Helps Foreign Workers Gain Citizenship

An overwhelming majority of UFCW Local 832 members at the Maple Leaf Consumer Foods pork plant in Brandon, Manitoba, Canada, voted last week to ratify a new contract with the company.

The new five-year contract covers about 2,300 workers, 75 percent of whom are immigrants, and contains important language for members working under the 'Manitoba Provincial Nominee Program,' which allows skilled workers to attain permanent residence and, eventually, citizenship in Canada.

The new contract makes Maple Leaf responsible for processing all the necessary paperwork, providing translators whenever required by foreign workers and paying for translation of the contract and the employee handbook if there are more than 100 members whose first language is not English.

"This contract was unique to bargain because of the diversity at the plant," said UFCW Local 832 President Robert Zeigler. "Our committee was successful in making strong improvements for everyone who works there." **OP**

New Research Report Finds Walmart Cost Chicago Area Jobs

A new study published by the Center for Urban Research and Learning at Loyola University Chicago found no evidence that the one and only Walmart store in the city, which opened on the West Side of Chicago in September 2006, sparked any significant net growth in economic activity or employment in the area.

The study, which is based on a series of three surveys of retail businesses in an area within a four-mile radius of the Walmart store, also found:

- 82 enterprises out of the basic sample of 306 enterprises followed went out of business over the study period.

- The probability of going out of business was significantly higher for businesses close to the Walmart location.
- Walmart's presence has cost the community nearly 300 full-time jobs, about as many the company added.

To read the complete report, visit

<http://luc.edu/curl/pdfs/Projects/WalMartReport2009122.doc>. **OP**

Hold the Date for Upcoming UFCW Legislative and Political Conference

Please hold the dates of **Monday, March 15 to Thursday, March 18, 2010**, for an important legislative and political conference to be held at the **Capital Hilton Hotel, 1001 Sixteenth Street, NW, Washington, D.C. 20036**.

An intensified effort will be made to have **ALL** UFCW local union officers and their designated Legislative and Political Representatives attend this conference.

The stakes have never been higher with legislative issues before the U.S. Congress, including health care reform, labor law reform, immigration, and pension reform.

UFCW's political strategy and get-out-the-vote initiatives to address the anticipated challenges of the upcoming 2010 midterm elections will also be on the top of the agenda.

The conference details and registration information will be sent to UFCW local unions soon. **OP**



What Locals Should Know About Social Security No-Match Letters

The U.S. Social Security Administration (SSA) is still sending out no-match letters to employers. The SSA sends letters when a combination of a worker's name and Social Security number does not match the Agency's record. When such a mis-match occurs, the SSA is unable to attribute the worker's earnings to his/her earnings record. SSA then notifies the employer to request corrected information. Employers often use the opportunity to fire workers without due process.

Last year, a federal appeals court issued a favorable decision that we can use to deal with the SSN no-match situation in our respective local unions.

The facts involved a company that fired their workers because they did not correct their Social Security information within the three days that the company gave them. A grievance was filed by the workers' union saying that the workers were unjustly fired, which is a violation of the collective bargaining agreement.

An arbitrator ruled in the union's favor and ordered that the fired workers be reinstated and receive back pay. The company appealed and the district court overturned the arbitrator's decision. The federal appeals court reversed the district court and reinstated the arbitrator's ruling.

How you should proceed when faced with a SSN no-match situation:

- Argue that a SSN no-match does not mean a worker does not have the authorization to work or has violated any immigration policy.
- Make the case that there are many reasons that can explain a SSN no-match. Therefore, a worker can have the authorization to work but still have a SSN no-match.
- Argue that because a worker does not correct their SSN information within the time frame provided by the company, does not mean that the worker lacks the authorization to work. **OP**

New Study Highlights Economic Benefits of Comprehensive Immigration Reform for U.S. Workers

A study released last week by the Immigration Policy Center and the Center for American Progress finds that even during the recession, comprehensive immigration reform—not mass deportation or temporary worker programs—produces the greatest economic benefits.

Based in part on surveys done after the 1986 amnesty program which resulted in the legalization of nearly 3 million undocumented immigrants, *Raising the Floor for American Workers: the Economic Benefits of Comprehensive Immigration Reform* further concludes:

- Comprehensive immigration reform would generate an increase in U.S. Gross Domestic Product (GDP) of \$1.5 trillion over 10 years and boost wages for both native-born and newly legalized immigrant workers.
- The temporary worker program would generate an increase in GDP of \$792 billion over 10 years, but lead to wages decline for both native-born and newly legalized immigrant workers.
- Mass deportation would reduce GDP by \$2.6 trillion over 10 years - not including the cost of deportation - and lead to wages increase for less-skilled, native-born workers but wages reduction for higher-skilled natives and a widespread job loss.
- Legalizing the nation's unauthorized workers and putting new legal limits on immigration that rise and fall with U.S labor demand would help lay the foundation for robust, just, and widespread economic growth.

The full report is available at <http://www.americanprogress.org/issues/2010/01/pdf/immigrationeconreport.pdf>. **OP**

Due to the Martin Luther King, Jr. holiday, observed this year on Monday, January 18, the next issue of *OnPoint* will be available on Wednesday, January 20, 2010.