



How Important is the Delegate Election?



How's that concession thingy workin' out for ya? If you're anything like me you are sick and tired of the International Union sending contracts and contract modifications that are pure give backs to the company, while the top executives rake in millions. Going back to 2005 the International Union has allowed the company to dig into our contract to look for ways to be profitable.

Don't you wish you could hold the International Executive Board accountable like you do your Local Union Executive Board; through elections? The fact is you can, but it's a little bit more tricky.

Often when we have elections for Delegates to the Constitutional Convention, who we pick has been an afterthought to the Local Executive Board elections. In light of the constant concessions that have been pushed on us by the International these Delegate elections take on a greater significance than ever before. You see the Delegates we elect to represent us at the Constitutional Convention are who elect the International Executive Board and vote on resolution and amendments to the UAW Constitution.

Throughout the last few years I've closely monitored the opposition to these concessions. There is someone who has stood out in his opposition to the concessions. I'm hoping that he may be willing to accept a nomination for UAW President at the Convention.

Another important function of the Delegates we will be electing is voicing support or opposition to Amendments to the Constitution and voting on those Amendments. There is currently an Amendment to the UAW Constitution, originating from our February membership meeting, that if adopted would allow all of us to have a vote for the International. It could use some cleaning up, which we'd like to do at the April 15th Union Meeting.

Also at the April 15th Union Meeting there are a list of resolutions that we are hopeful could begin to turn the direction of our International Union to once again represent the best interest of the entire membership. Resolutions passed by the Delegates at the Constitutional Convention are essentially a platform that the International Union is directed by; similar to the platform of a political party. I have worked with the Autoworkers Caravan (an organization of active and retired UAW rank and file members) to reshape those ideas into a more comprehensive plan. We have named that plan "**Turnaround Plan for the UAW**". Under the umbrella of this plan we have developed several resolutions. The subject of these resolutions range from, **International Officers Required to Accept the Same Concessions (Without Being Subsidized) as they have negotiated for the rank & file**, to **Fighting for All Workers (Global Solidarity vs. Corporate Globalization)**, and **Rebuilding Our Fighting Union to Celebrate Our 75th Anniversary**. These are just a few from the package that are the beginning of the process of reforming our union.

As this shows -- considering the openness to concession that has become prevalent at the International Union -- who you choose for Delegate to the 35th Constitutional Convention can have a huge impact on the direction of your union! Consider your choice for Delegate to the Convention carefully, it could be the most important vote you cast in this election. Ask the candidates if they are committed to advancing a reform agenda. Elect Delegates that are willing to raise their voices to hold International Officers accountable and who will raise their voices to contribute to the process of reform that we have begun by passing Amendments and Resolutions at our membership meetings. And; most of all be proud that the members of UAW Local 551 have been a big part of the reform process.

Vote In Solidarity, April 20th, 2010; polls open from midnight until 7PM

Scott Houldieson, Candidate for Delegate to the 35th UAW Constitutional Convention