

New York State Teamsters Conference Pension and Retirement Fund

Mailing Address:
PO Box 4928
Syracuse, NY 13221-4928
Telephone: 315.455.9790
Fax: 315.234.1047
E-mail: benefits@nytfund.org



July 20, 2017

General Executive Board
International Brotherhood of Teamsters
25 Louisiana Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20001

Re: New York State Teamsters Conference Pension & Retirement Fund

Dear Executive Board:

The New York State Teamsters Conference Pension and Retirement Fund is facing insolvency within the next ten years. Absent some action, more than 34,000 Teamsters and their families in New York face an uncertain retirement future that could mean no benefit at all. Our situation is not unlike many other Teamster pension funds across the country that are in crisis and facing insolvency or are already insolvent. You can refuse to accept this reality, but it is the reality.

Using the only tool available to them at this time, the Trustees of the New York State Fund made the very difficult decision to file an application under the Kline-Miller Multiemployer Pension Reform Act (MPRA). No one is in favor of reducing benefits, but failure to act would mean a far worse fate for our participants. Although there is opposition to the application, many of our participants – when confronted with the frightening alternative – understand the reason the Trustees filed the application. Similarly, our retiree representative – a Teamster retiree facing benefit cuts himself – made the difficult decision to support the application.

It is for this reason that we find it puzzling and extremely disappointing that the International Brotherhood of Teamsters would file comments in opposition to our MPRA application – the only option currently available to save the Fund. More troubling is that the IBT did not simply state an understandable concern over the pension crisis, but instead sought to invalidate and undermine the technical details of our application. IBT Vice President John Murphy's letter was an obvious attempt to derail the Fund's application.

What is even more difficult to understand about the IBT's strategy is that, while it has put forth significant resources to seek to undermine our application, it has put forward no meaningful solution otherwise. In fact, the IBT's legislative proposal announced two months ago by Vice President Murphy would not prevent our insolvency or that of many other Teamster pension funds. Yet, with no other viable solution – everyone knows KOPPA cannot be passed and is not a viable solution – the IBT would prefer to oppose the only remedy available and jeopardize our participant's retirement security in the hope

BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Employer Representatives

Michael S. Sealzo, Sr.
Co-Chairman
Broad Brook, CT

Robert L. Schaeffer
Bernville, PA

Daniel W. Schmidt
Lebanon, PA

Tom J. Ventura
Overland Park, KS

Labor Representatives

John A. Bulgaro
Co-Chairman
Albany, NY

Brian K. Hammond
Potsdam, NY

Paul A. Markwitz
Rochester, NY

Mark D. May
Syracuse, NY

PARTICIPATING TEAMSTER LOCALS

118 Rochester, NY

264 Cheektowaga, NY

294 Albany, NY

317 Syracuse, NY

449 Buffalo, NY

529 Elmira, NY

560 Union City, NJ

687 Potsdam, NY

812 Great Neck, NY

that at some future point the federal government may provide an alternative to protect retirement benefits.

The Fund's Trustees stand ready to support any legislative proposal that can protect these retirement benefits. In fact, we have been actively working with our New York Congressional delegation to educate and encourage such a proposal. But time is not on our side. Every day there is not a long-term solution literally results in a greater chance that retirement benefits will be reduced by an ever-increasing amount.

It is time to stop playing politics with our participants' retirements. We have an obligation to do what's in the best interests of our participants, both retirees and actives. Unless and until there is another viable solution, our MPRA application is the only option.

Sincerely,



Kenneth R. Stilwell
Executive Administrator