

# CHICAGO TEAMSTERS JOINT COUNCIL 25



## NEWS»

### TEAMSTERS ENSURE SNOW REMOVAL PRIVATIZATION MELTS AWAY

#### Chicago Scraps Plan to Outsource Vital City Services

Following a fierce defense by the Teamsters to protect public employees and government accountability, the City of Chicago has abandoned its plans to privatize side-street snow removal.

Teamsters Joint Council 25 and Local 726 exhausted efforts for two months to oppose the Daley administration's plan for privatization. Chicago aldermen were urged to reject the proposal to hire private firms to remove snow on the city's side streets since the ordinance was introduced. Union leaders issued opposition policy statements, met privately with several key legislators and drafted a resolution to help aldermen defeat the measure.

"The voice of the Teamsters echoed throughout City Hall as a reminder that our public officials will be held accountable when union jobs are threatened in Chicago," said John T. Coli, President of Joint Council 25. "Public officials must be responsible for the services they provide and eliminating hardworking employees to outsource public works is not the way to meet our responsibilities."

The Teamsters' coordinated campaign spawned strong aldermanic opposition by outlining the overwhelming damage privatization would inflict on the city's employees and budget. The union's opposition urged aldermen to consider:

- the number of city residents that privatization would put out of work;
- the limited opportunities in private contracts for women and minorities;
- the loss of government accountability in overseeing service fulfillment; and
- the decline of high-quality services and rise of inadequate supervision.

The reality that privatizing side-street snow removal would do more harm than good was realized beyond City Hall. According to Streets and Sanitation Commissioner Tom Byrne, only a few private contractors even bothered to submit bids for the work.

"Privatization would have only cost the city more money, jeopardized the safety of our neighborhoods and left highly skilled Teamster workers out of a job," said Local 726 Trustee Becky Strzechowski, who played a large part in opposing the ordinance. "It's no wonder that no one, from aldermen to private firms, wanted to get involved with such a damaging proposal."